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ABSTRACT

The conference report of the 1964 Nevada Inter-tribal Indian Conference, designed to encourage cooperation and communication between Indians and non-Indians, deals with (a) Indians and opportunity, (b) Indians and the community, and (c) Indians and legislation. The document also records narration reflecting the attitudes of Indians in Nevada toward their life situation. Additionally, emphasis is given to the claims cases of such tribes as the Washoe, the Western Shoshone, and the Northern Paiute. This material "should prove valuable to those who are interested in Indian affairs, Nevada history and anthropology, social work and Indian education." (MB)

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THE NEVADA INTER-TRIBAL INDIAN CONFERENCE

PRESENTED MAY 1 and 2, 1964, by

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA -
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and

THE INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL OF NEVADA

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CENTER FOR WESTERN NORTH AMERICAN STUDIES,
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April 10, 1965

The Center for Western North American Studies is very pleased to make the proceedings of this significant Conference available to the public and to the participants.

The ideas contained in these proceedings should prove valuable to all who are interested in Indian affairs, Nevada history and anthropology, social work, and Indian education, among other fields.

Jack D. Forbes

Dr. Jack D. Forbes
Acting Director
Center for Western North
American Studies

THE NEVADA INTER-TRIBAL INDIAN CONFERENCE
University of Nevada, Reno
May 1 and 2, 1964

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THE NEVADA INTER-TRIBAL INDIAN CONFERENCE
University of Nevada, Reno
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I. WELCOME, GREETINGS

A. Charles J. Armstrong, President, University of Nevada
(May 1, Luncheon Meeting)

It is a pleasure to welcome all of you to the campus today. I understand the Nevada Inter-Tribal Council now has representation from six tribal councils in the State. I hope the Council will grow in that representation, and grow in its strength and ability to serve you and your needs in the future. Certainly, if the University can help in any way by cooperating in conferences of this kind, or in a more concrete way, we stand ready. I'm sure that your discussions will be productive and fruitful. We are very, very pleased to have you here. Thank you very much for being with us.

B. Grant S. Sawyer, Governor of the State of Nevada
(May 2, All-Conference Session)

I'm very happy to have the opportunity to come by just a moment to say hello. I've been hearing for some time about this Conference and, along with you, have been very excited about it. There are a great many things we need to do in Nevada. I think this may be the beginning of a fruitful kind of discussion. I have followed your deliberations, and it seems to me that they're on the highest kind of level. I saw in the paper yesterday what some of you had to say, and it appears to me that this is exactly the kind of thing that we should have been doing a long time ago. I hope that this will be a very productive session for you. But I hope even more that this will be just the beginning; that this will be the start of an annual conference in which all of us can join. Yesterday you were talking about communications. I agree that if we can talk with one another and exchange ideas and establish strong lines of communication, many of the problems that we all have will disappear. So, I want to extend to you my congratulations and my very best wishes. I hope that next year you will do the same thing, and that I will be able to join you. Thank you very much.

(On May 1, Governor Sawyer was represented by Walter Wilson, Director, Nevada Department of Commerce.)

C. Senator Alan Bible, Senator Howard Cannon, and Congressman Walter Baring sent their best wishes for a successful meeting and their regrets at being unable to attend.

II. INTRODUCTION TO THE CONFERENCE

A. John Dressler, Chairman, Nevada Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada

The purpose of our conference today is to encourage cooperation and communication between the non-Indians and the Indians of the State of Nevada, for better understanding between the two peoples. Lack of communication has been one cause of the Indian's slow progress in the field of education and other endeavors. I'm gratified to see so many people here interested in our problems, and to know that we may call upon you for your suggestions and your cooperation.

The Inter-Tribal Council feels it can be a source of information. By improving communication we feel we can help our people in many ways. We'll try to formulate purposes for our Indian people, and give them the feeling that they can help solve their own problems. We are grateful for your cooperation for this progress.

We were a little pessimistic about the outcome of our conference, but today that is gone. I'm certainly glad to see so many people here. We want our people to feel that they can come with confidence to you, to the Inter-Tribal Council, and to the state agencies for aid or information. We want to work together to accomplish a common goal.

Our meetings of the Inter-Tribal Council are open to anyone. We welcome suggestions and ideas. We hope that in time our people will take the initiative in programming their ideas for progress in education and other endeavors. We feel that our people are willing to cooperate and communicate.

Many of our Indians are located in remote parts of the State. Many of them have not been getting the information that they should. The Inter-Tribal Council can give them this information. We have published a newsletter, sponsored and financed by the Inter-Tribal Council, to

(John Dressler, Continued)

pass on to these remote areas and to anyone else interested in the information that we have gathered to promote our welfare. The results of these newsletters have been wonderful. We know we are reaching people. Eventually we hope to put the newsletter out by subscription on an individual basis. We feel that would be of benefit to our people.

We feel that education among our Indian people is still inadequate. There are many dropouts. We feel that through the newsletter we can help educate our own people to the great need for higher education and stimulate our young children to continue in school.

It is hoped that the non-Indians will give us support in many ways as we request it. The Inter-Tribal Council also needs the cooperation of the Indian people for progress toward our common goals. After the conference, we expect to follow up with smaller conferences in various communities to bring about a better understanding among the non-Indians and the Indians. In that way, in that particular community, there will be a better relationship. I wish to thank you for your attendance again and for better progress and a continued good relationship. Thank you.

B. Nellie Harnar, Guidance Teacher, Stewart Indian School

I chose to talk on the history of Indian education in Nevada. On Fremont's second trip through Nevada, Truckee and some Paiutes went with him to California. One of the great impressions the Indians received was the schools for the young whites. Before Truckee's death he obtained a promise that his granddaughters, Sarah Winnemucca and her sister, would be taken to a friend in California where the girls would be schooled.

Later, Indian leaders asked the Governor of Nevada Territory and Superintendent of Indian Affairs, James W. Nye, if schools could be available to their children. He recommended that the Indians be taught reading, writing, farming, spinning, weaving, preserving meats and grain. He felt the schools were a necessity to the Indians. Agent Frederick Dodge agreed with the Governor. Agent Wasson made a flowery tribute to the Indian people

(Nellie Harnar, Continued)

in his recommendations for the schools.

Later, however, Agent Bateman reported on September 30, 1871, that he thought food was far more important than the schools that the Indians were demanding for their children. Finally, in 1878, the Secretary of the Interior reported that schools were being established on the Indian reservations in the United States and that the English language would be used to impart elementary and practical knowledge.

On March 1, 1878, the first Federal school in Nevada was opened at the Pyramid Lake Reservation with 18 students attending. Other children who were not in school were helping their parents and relatives to obtain food. Then Agent Barnes recommended that the students be given subsistence so they could attend school. The day school started on September 1, 1879, 52 students were enrolled. School was held in a large room of the agency building at Pyramid Lake. The students who attended regularly showed much improvement and the agent reported that year that there was no difference in capacity for learning between the Caucasian and the Indian children.

In 1880, Agent W. M. Garvey recommended that a boarding school be held at Pyramid Lake instead of the day school because of the irregular attendance of the students. In 1882, the boarding school opened with vocational training added. When the children started the farm, the parents helped by taking their teams to haul supplies and lumber. They cleared the brush on the selected farm site and they leveled and fenced it.

Agent McMaster said the children were eager to learn, but sometimes the learning was hard. In 1886, the Nevada agent reported to the Commissioner that in two years there were no occasions for whipping or slapping the students. On page 195 of that report he said, "Unlike white children, it is seldom that they quarrel among themselves. They never fight, and from school age up it is a rare thing to hear one cry." In 1887, the Pyramid Lake Boarding School was filled to capacity, and ten boys went to Grand Junction, Colorado, to further their education. Later the agent regretted the boys had left because the parents mourned them as though they were dead.

(Nellie Harnar, Continued)

It is true that there was a need for an advanced school for Indians in the State.

In this centennial year, it is nice to remember that the Thirteenth Legislature of Nevada passed an act in 1887 to establish an Indian School with the proceeds of a $10,000 bond issue. An Indian school commission was created to purchase land and to start the school. The 240 acres of land purchased were about 3 miles south of Carson City. This school was called Clear Creek Indian School. It was an industrial school where the girls learned home economics and related subjects, and the boys learned the trade subjects.

In 1890, the Federal Government bought the new school property from the State. United States Senator Stewart was instrumental in this purchase. Children from all Nevada tribes were eligible to attend this school, then known as Carson Indian School. At first, some Paiute parents objected to sending their children to the school located in Washoe territory. Later they were less reluctant after admonishing their children--the older ones--"Don't get too interested in the Washoe boys and girls. Don't marry them, they're too mean." The children replied, "Don't worry, the Washoes say the same things to their children. They say the Paiutes are mean."

The school patterned after the Army with drills, bugle calls to meals and to school and the sounding of bedtime taps. During the week there were drills before breakfast, and on Sunday there were inspections for both boys and girls. Church attendance was required of all students. All students attended Sunday School classes in the morning and the evening service. Thus, Carson Indian School educated the Nevada Indians.

The employees had the pioneer spirit. They worked long hours for small pay. Teaching the Indian children in a second language was not easy. Only the elementary grades were taught. Then in the early 20's some graduates commuted to Carson City with the employees' children to attend the city's high school. They finished and went to schools of higher learning, and then worked in vocations that they had trained for.

(Nellie Harnar, Continued)

After this experience the Federal officials recommended Carson Indian School expand its grades through the high school. So in 1928, the expansion was started until the full 12 grades were taught. Carson Indian School ranked high in the nation's Indian schools; educationally, in sportsmanship, and in the beauty of its campus. It helped to banish all tribal prejudices. It extended the students into state schools and on to colleges. It gave students competition in the sports with other schools of the State and, in general, contibuted a civilizing element for the Indians of Nevada. (Today Stewart Indian School has over 600 students. Most of these are from other states, principally Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. Very few are from Nevada.)

Throughout the State there were Federal day schools in the Indian communities and emphasis was placed on new educational concepts regarding Indian children. The Indian children were capable of doing the regular school schedule of the Nevada curriculum and learning variations as non-Indian children. The Indian children were integrated then into the Nevada Public Schools. The Nevada State Department of Education feels that the assimilation of the Indian children into the State's public schools could be rated as the highest in the West. And I believe they have reason to be proud.

Now since your children are integrated into the public schools, perhaps some of you are wondering about post-high schools. There are several avenues for your children who wish to go on. There are the Federal schools (Haskell Institute in Kansas, Chilocco in Oklahoma) which are available to Indian students and the only requisites are that the students furnish their own transportation and their own clothing. The Indian School of Practical Nursing at Albuquerque, New Mexico, offers training for one year; books, room, board, laundry, are offered. (The Capitol Branch, American Association of University Women, Carson City, in alternate years, gives an award of $100 to a Stewart High School girl graduate who is furthering her education. This year Charlotte Graham, Shoshone, of Duckwater, Nevada, received this award. Charlotte is going to the school of Practical Nursing.) The Institute of American Indian Arts, Bureau of Indian Affairs at Santa Fe, New Mexico, is available to those specifically

(Nellie Harnar, Continued)

interested in the arts. A Dental Assistant training program of the Division of Indian Health, Public Health service at Brigham City, Utah, has a nine-month course available to girls eligible for a working scholarship at the Federal Boarding School, where room and board are available for some work done by the students after school hours.

Tribal grants have been awarded at the Pyramid Lake Reservation and the Shoshone-Paiute tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation, Idaho and Nevada; these are supplements to federal grants of $1,000 per year. Federal loans and grants are available to Indian students of one-fourth Indian blood. More details for these may be secured from Mr. William Whipple, who is our Reservation Principal at Stewart. Several colleges and universities offer scholarships to students of Indian blood who are matriculated in their colleges. Social and fraternal organizations also offer scholarships to outstanding students in their localities. The Fleischmann Scholarship in Nevada is offered to Indian students who are in their second, third, or fourth years of college, when the grades of the students show they are sincere and steady.

Now, I wish to say something about parental school responsibility. Please do not think I'm presumptous to tell you how to raise your children. In my thirty-four years as a teacher, I've found them well-behaved, kind, considerate, courageous, and hard working. But I wish to emphasize, however, that Nevada Indian parents today all have been schooled. So they can read to their young children. That is one of the things you must do. Read them good books, get them interested in reading, help select good books for them, have newspapers, something they can read to keep up with today's activities.

In this day and age with the world moving so fast, you and I and your children need to know what is going on. The schools, the counties and the State have libraries from which your children can obtain books to read. Help the children to maintain regular attendance in school. And you must see that there is time set aside for a study period. Now it isn't like going to Carson Indian School, where the employees took all the responsibility of giving a study period, and supervising, and so

(Nellie Harnar, Continued)

forth. Now it's up to the parents in their own homes to give the children the opportunities to progress with much study, and it isn't just because they are Indians that the children need to study, the white children need lots of study, too.

There are churches available in most communities. Children should round their education with a religious outlook on life. Living today and tomorrow needs a stress of brotherly love of all humanity.

C. Edward Johnson, Chairman, Conference Welcoming Committee, introduced the members of the welcoming committee.

D. Warren d'Azevedo, Associate Professor of Anthropology

Thank you, Mr. Johnson. Chairman Dressler, Mrs. Harnar, Wa-pa-shone singers, and guests--greetings. I think it is most appropriate that this conference is held during the centennial year in the State of Nevada. And though the campus is very noisy today and the best behavior isn't being presented, it may be especially appropriate that this conference is taking place during the student Mackay Day celebration at the University of Nevada. During the centennial year the citizens of Nevada give special recognition to their particular traditions and express a pride in their community. It seems to me specially important that part of this activity be directed to the traditions and interests of that portion of the Nevada community--some 8,000 strong--who once inhabited the region prior to the arrival of a rather large and increasing crowd of uninvited guests. The early settlers in Nevada in the 1850's and 60's are like the man who came to dinner, who invited himself and then stayed on and on and on, later bringing his family, his distant relatives and all of his friends and acquaintances.

Today, the students here at the University are celebrating a tradition of their own, tied very closely to the symbols of the history of those early guests who came to stay for dinner and stayed on and on and on. Their dress, their behavior and their pistols are perhaps not too different from the dress, behavior, and the pistols of some of those early guests. I was a bit relieved to

LUNCHEON MEETING, May 1

Upper Right: John Dressler, Chairman of the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada, welcomes participants to the first Nevada Inter-Tribal Indian Conference. On his left are Syble Rupert, Secretary of the Inter-Tribal Council and Edward Johnson, Chairman of the Welcoming Committee.

Lower Right: Nellie Harnar, Guidance Teacher, Stewart Indian School, reviews the history of Indian education in Nevada. Delbert Howard, Inter-Tribal Council Delegate from the Winnemucca Colony, and Syble Rupert, Carson Colony, also pictured.

Below Right: Jeannette Allan presents a sign language interpretation of the Lord's Prayer with the Wa-Pa-Shone Glee Club, lead by Mrs. Leah Manning, Social Worker, Bureau of Indian Affairs (Owyhee). The Indian chorus presented a group of twelve Shoshone, Paiute and Washoe songs, cluding handgame songs, puberty ceremonial songs and social round dance songs. Members of the Glee Club are Jeannette Allan, Gloria Thomas, Vera Thomas, Gladys Johnny, Velta Cleveland, Fay McDade, Clarissa Caseres, Winona Manning, Tena Manning, and Freda Smokey. Some visitors, including Mrs. Harrison Frazier, joined the chorus for the day.

Below Left: Some of the participants during the luncheon at the Jot Travis Union.

(Warren d'Azevedo, Continued)

see that the symbolism of the day is not entirely one-sided. One young man was walking about the campus with an arrow stuck through his ten-gallon hat.

It's very gratifying to be able to take part in this conference in which there will be an opportunity for a full exchange of views and a new step in the direction of increased understanding between Indians and non-indians in the State of Nevada. I was impressed by Mrs. Syble Rupert's phrasing of the intention of this conference when she stated during a television interview the other day the following. She said that the whites and Indians of Nevada have been on either side of a sagebrush curtain and it is time for that curtain to be torn down so that there can be a more productive and cooperative relationship in the future. I think that those of us who are not Indians here at the conference stand to learn a great deal, and that this may be considered one of the important purposes of this gathering. I think that as guests in the house who have to come to stay for dinner, and who have stayed on and on and on, that we might keep in mind that the Shoshone, the Paiutes, and the Washoe people of this region are possibly descendents of peoples who have inhabited this house, not merely for a hundred years (which the centennial commemorates) but for many, many thousands of years. And we should be reminded that they got on very well over those thousands of years, despite the deserts, despite the scarcity of water, and despite the conditions which might try the hardiest survival group or training crew of the Army or any Eagle Boy Scout. They can teach the rest of us many things we need to learn. One thing we recent visitors can learn, for example, is how to become a welcome and cooperative guest in a crowded house.

E. Edward Hinckley, Education Specialist, PHS Indian Hospital, Schurz, Nevada, explained the procedure for the small group sessions.

F. Martin Levine, Moderator of the All Conference Sessions, urged the small group session moderators and the participants to encourage a free exchange of ideas.

III. ALL CONFERENCE SESSIONS (May 1 and May 2)

A. Indians and Opportunity

1. Reports by small group session representatives, Indians and Opportunity

a. Alvin James (May 1)

I would like to outline what we are really trying to talk about. We have the people on one hand, and the goals on the other. In order to bridge this gap, we need opportunities. We came up with some general conclusions.

In general, the problems facing the Indians are no different from those of the white communities, except that in addition, Indians have a cultural disadvantage and a language barrier, if they spoke their native tongue when they were smaller.

It was pretty will agreed by everyone that education is the thing that we're lacking. We came up with the following ideas.

It was pointed out that professional as well as vocational education should be encouraged. The professional people would work with their tribal communities and set up counseling services for the young people, all the way through their education.

The Indian is primarily geared to the trade school, and is interested in a man's kind of work, with his hands. There is a lack of communication between children and their parents. Our university students said they need counseling, even at their level. If they had counseling at the start, they would have gotten along a lot better. It was also brought out by one of the anthropologists that the status of people trained in the trades is now very similar to that of technicians and professionals.

The non-Indian is also involved and, in close cooperation with these non-Indians who have the

(Alvin James, Continued)

very same problem, Indians could get a trade school established in Nevada. By cooperating, both groups would be much stronger in seeking funds and the other things that are needed.

b. Alyce Williams (May 1)

We didn't come up with anything definite because this group is not able to make any legislation. All we can do is talk about our problems and bring them before the public. One of the men from Churchill County High School said he thought some kind of committee could be formed to make sure that all of our children have able counseling from the time they're in the eighth grade through high school, and even into college if they need it.

There was one other important thing brought out in our group discussion and this was, why are so many of our people ashamed of being Indian? They just don't like the idea of being Indian. Someone came up with this idea. Why not teach our Indian people more about their heritage? Maybe some of our own Indian people would be interested in becoming anthropologists and finding out about our Indian heritage, and how good it was, and then give it back to our Indian people, because this is the only way we're going to be strong as a people, by being proud of ourselves.

Martin Levine: Was there any statement that this shame interferred with taking advantage of opportunities available?

Alyce Williams: Yes, after getting an education, Indians are ashamed to come back to their people.

Martin Levine: Do people use the education then?

Alyce Williams: They use their education, but only to their own advantage, and not to help all of the Indian population.

(Alyce Williams, Continued)

Martin Levine: As you point out, you're not solving a problem, you're bringing it up. The type of opportunity Indians need is no different from the type needed by the non-Indian. I don't know if this is the first time this has been said by Indians or not, but certainly it's been said here.

c. Alvin James (May 2)

In our discussion today, the definite need for information was pointed out. We dealt primarily with the need to disseminate information.

We talked about the problem of stimulation from the home, to get the younger Indian people to have the same drive as the non-Indian. What is the reason for this lack of drive, and this tendency to hang back?

We talked about Indians defining their goals. What do they want out of life? We found that Indians are frequently influenced by their older people, who don't have the full grasp of what competition is. But that's what non-Indian society is--competition. You've got to be able to do things better than the other guy or you're going to be out of a job.

We agreed that the Indian is the same as the non-Indian in ability to learn, and also in ability to disagree. It was brought out by our moderator that the IQ tests are aimed at the white middle class. The Indian might fail one aspect of those tests. But if you give an Indian a test on something he knows something about, things that occur in his life on the reservation, he may far surpass the non-Indian in this area. So there is no really true test of potential.

In this line, it was asked, "What is normal for the Indian?" They know what is normal for the white people--to compete and to try to get ahead. But because of the difference in cultural

(Alvin James, Continued)

background, this hasn't been instilled in many Indians.

It's good to have opinions, but when you get into suspicions and undermine the opponent in the wrong way, that is wrong. The word "stereotype" was mentioned. When he sees an Indian or hears someone mention an Indian, what does the white man think about? Does he see a guy walking down Commercial Row? Does he think about a person sitting in front of his hut, weaving baskets?

The non-Indians are stereotyped, too. Indians talk about white people, but what kind of white people do we mean? We agreed we have to break this problem down into recognizable units, to stratify it. We have to say what kind of person we're talking about. This is a person that doesn't have an education. This is a person that is a dropout. This is a person that had no stimulation from home. This is a person that grew up in a white community.

It was said that a lot of times an Indian just learns to be a white man, and that isn't good. Indians think the white man, again this is the white man in general, is taught to cheat other people. This is how competition looks to Indians sometimes. The old Indians didn't try to cheat the other guy. It was decided that we should hold on to such things. This is a value of the Indian culture.

The older Indian people talk in terms of their own experience. The younger people hear this. Then they go to school and are taught different values. This confuses them. One person said we should look forward and think backward, or look forward and hold on to the good old things we had in the past.

We went on to discuss vocational opportunities. Again it was brought out very strongly the need for an industrial school. Everyone can't be a

(Alvin James, Continued)

college graduate. Some can't even complete high school, for that matter.

This idea of the trade school frequently appeared. It was brought out that maybe we should have a trade and business school, so that we could have a place for our dropouts, and a school for our people who graduate from high school who aren't ready to go to the University. They could get the first two years and get a real good start. We felt a local school like this would recognize the Nevada people's needs. If you have a development going up, and you want to train your people toward certain specialized jobs, maybe that could be provided by such a school. It was brought up that Haskell is crowded. A lot of times applications are turned down. A local school would eliminate the cost of transportation. It would also help preserve our Indian heritage right here in Nevada. We've got a lot of things to be proud of. Even though we didn't drive the buffalo around or spear them, or dramatic things like that, we've done a lot of things, too.

It was brought out that young Indians are discouraged by delay in hearing about opportunities, by bureaucracy and red tape. It was brought out that we need easier and quicker ways of getting information to them.

It was also brought out that Indians with more education should go back and help their people as much as they can.

So we tried to talk about the recognizable parts of the problems, and I think we did.

d. Alyce Williams (May 2)

Because my friend did such a fine job, I'm going to be very brief. We talked of opportunity as being something we should grasp if we wanted it. We talked about seeing a little paper boy

(Alyce Williams, Continued)

at five o'clock in the morning and he happened to be a non-Indian boy. We recognized that maybe the white person was more aggressive in getting some opportunities. As my friend suggested, we stereotype people and say, "These are Indians and these are white people". Mr. Abraham said he knew quite a few white people who didn't wear shoes, and we agreed with this. We said we were afraid to grasp an opportunity; afraid it had strings to it. And we had been conditioned. We were promised something and it didn't come, or it came and something else was hitched to it. We recognized the Legislature is sometimes like the archeologists and Paiutes. We don't all speak with one voice. We had a very touching testimonial from Mr. Harry Sampson, who is 72, and went to Stewart. By his courage and by his example he showed us that there were Indian people that could go ahead and grasp a situation. My own personal opinion is that Mr. Sampson is still an Indian, but he has taken advantage of much of the white opportunity offered. We concluded that we hoped we could meet again. Personally, I would like to express my appreciation for being here and being informed as I have been informed by my Indian friends. Thank you.

2. Discussion (May 1 and 2), Indians and Opportunity

Unidentified Participant: What do you mean by vocational education? Now the educator has one definition of it. I don't know what yours is.

Alvin James: What I think they were talking about was the trade school type: mechanics, bakers, cooks, carpenters, plumbers. Everyone should be a plumber, you get six dollars an hour.

Unidentified Participant: I don't know much about the labor set-up in the State of Nevada. However, in Arizona, several years ago, in a meeting at the Papago Reservation, the representatives of several labor unions, especially those

(Unidentified Participant, Continued)

connected with the building trades, expressed the fact that they were not interested in applicants who were manually trained. They said they wanted applicants who were academically trained--those who had a high school diploma or its equivalent. They said they had their own apprenticeship program in which they would train their own members in the building trades. I don't know how this effects your statement, but to me there is only one conclusion.

Ray Mills: Well, back in the '30's when I went to school we had what we called the vocational high school, and you could come out of there so you had enough credits to go on to college, and if you wanted to, you could learn a trade, too. You could have both. But they stopped that.

Ed Johnson: I think the problem in Nevada is that we don't have a trade high school, like they have in California, where the people can get a high school diploma and a trade, for everybody, white and Indian alike.

Unidentified Participant: I'd like to inform Mr. Mills that all trade schools have not been closed to Indian students. We have Haskell Indian School that still has trade training for their Indian students, there is a practical nursing school in Albuquerque, they have the school in Santa Fe, and then there are grants given out to students that wish to go on for training in mechanics, auto body, and different training programs that they would like to get into.

Mark Young: I feel compelled to add my voice to this discussion of vocational high schools. We see a terrific need for the boy who may not be able to grasp some of the educational concepts which train for college to have a trade, and to have some of the education which goes with that trade. Go get 'em.

Nick Jackson: One of the things brought up was the fact that the people attending the

(Nick Jackson, Continued)

meeting didn't feel the level of education in the Indian schools was equal to the level of education in the white schools. They felt upgrading the school systems within the Indian schools might be invaluable. They felt that a graduating Indian couldn't go into the next grade without further education.

Martin Levine: Is this the opinion that everybody held?

Alyce Williams: Yes. Especially those residing on reservations found that when the children graduate from the eighth grade and go in to high school, they find it hard to catch up and be on the same level with the other students who have gone through the regular public schools in town.

Martin Levine: I just want to remind everyone here that one of the purposes of this conference is to set up an exchange of opinion, so the important thing is not so much that we're going to get a vocational school, but that people express themselves on the idea of opportunity, both Indian and non-Indian. So by all means you're all welcome. Get up and speak your piece and let your voice be heard. I think this is far more important than the ultimate solutions that we are shooting for, such as a vocational training school or counseling.

Actually there are many other things here that are important, that are more basic. For instance this matter of shame. And the matter of shame may account for the fact that people here don't speak up. The important thing is the feeling we develop in this matter of communications by talking to one another in a meaningful and intelligent way.

3. Summary, by C. H. Poehlman, Recorder for the small group session on Indians and Opportunity

At the Nevada Inter-Tribal Council held in Reno on May 1 and 2, 1964, it was agreed that opportunity is the bridge between people and goals, and that opportunities are limited by individual training and skills. Education is the most important means of opening up opportunities. At the present time, in the Reno area, there are many opportunities for Indian people, based on their qualifications or skills, regardless of the fact that they may be Indian.

One of the greatest difficulties Indians have in finding employment is due to not being prepared. Job opportunities have declined since the Stewart Indian School changed its policy in regard to vocational training. Indian children should get vocational training after completing high school, and qualified students should specialize in advanced training: anthropology or linguistics, where they could change both white and Indian attitudes. One of the great blocks to opportunity is the non-Indian's stereotyped thinking of an Indian and the Indian's stereotyped thinking of a non-Indian. The level of education of the parent does not necessarily become a restriction for the level of education of the children.

"Successful" Indians and "educated" Indians do not resort to the use of alcohol in excess. Too many Indians sit back and wait for opportunity to come to them instead of going out and seeking it. Parents do not tell children of opportunities and do not push their children. It is the parents' responsibility for the education of the children: the older ones should guide the younger students toward the meaning of education. Parents should realize things are constantly changing and what was right for parents is not necessarily right for their children. Direction of training of skills should be geared to the next ten years.

(C. H. Poehlman, Continued)

A tribal education committee would be a link between parents and schools. In many instances Indian children and parents are not aware of the scholarship and grant opportunities for Indian students. Indian children will not take advantage of vocational training if it is too far away from home.

Many Indians still have the attitude, "What is the white man going to cheat us out of next?".

B. Indians and the Community

1. Reports by small group session representatives, Indians and the Community

a. Syble Rupert (May 1)

We talked about the opportunities for Indians in their communities. There seem to be a number of opportunities to improve relationships between Indians and the non-Indian community, like joining the PTA and taking an interest in all the school activities. Even if you have to sit on the football field and half freeze to death, it's a way of communicating. You can join different organizations. This will not only help the individual that is participating, but it will help your children and your neighbors' children, Indian and non-Indian. Invite your non-Indian neighbors into your meetings, to your tea parties, to your cake sales, and get to know one another. That's the only way we're going to break through the barrier.

b. JoAnn Aleck (May 1)

In our group discussion about the Indian and the community, several questions were put to the group. What do you feel are your responsibilities as citizens of the State of Nevada? The first one pointed out was the responsibility of registering

(JoAnn Aleck, Continued)

to vote. Each individual must register, know the candidates he is voting for, and to investigate his political viewpoint. Another point brought out was active participation in organizations like the PTA and service clubs.

c. Robert Bauer (May 2)

Since I am fairly new to the problems of the Indian community in this State, I should like to give just a few highlights that became very apparent to me as I listened to the discussion. Many Indians appear to feel a kind of powerlessness with respect to some of their most urgent problems. It was brought up that a tribal council has powers very similar to a federally chartered municipal corporation, and acts as a governing body. Yet there is frequently no communication between the council and the people of the tribe. Frequently, the councilmen themselves do not have a full and clear idea what their function should be, much less how to involve the whole community in the planning and the legislation of the council. Here is one of the great gaps of Indian community life. It might well be necessary to establish much more communication. Then we found, as far as Indian land and ownership and assignment of land to individuals and their heirs are concerned, there is a great deal of powerlessness again, because faced on the one hand with very complex legislation, and on the other hand with tribal customs, it is too easy to feel here is something we cannot and maybe need not do anything about.

d. Syble Rupert (May 2)

In our Indians and the Community group we discussed the tribal councils and members of the community, and felt that if the tribal councils would invite their people to the tribal council meetings, and ask the people for their opinions and ideas on what can be done to help, the tribal council would have a better chance of helping their people. But if the councils

(Syble Rupert, Continued)

don't work with their people, they don't know what's going on, and they have no idea of what the council expects of them. So, if you can involve the people and the members of your community, both Indian and non-Indian, with your councils, I believe you will have a better chance of working out a lot of your own problems.

2. Discussion (May 1 and 2), Indians and the Community

Erma Foster: In our community (Walker River), we're not active. We continue fighting. There are a lot of white people here that are very interested in Indian problems. If there are any of you from around Yerington, Fallon and Hawthorne that would help us there at Schurz, it would be better.

Syble Rupert: Throw a few parties. Invite your non-Indian neighbors.

Erma Foster: But we need a little help.

Syble Rupert: You have to figure out a way to get your peoples together. Have your tribal council invite the non-Indians to their meetings.

Ray Mills: That can work in reverse, too. I've lived here in town for years and I belong to three organizations: the Sierra Club, the Nevada Conservation Society and one of the Rock Clubs. I'm the only Indian in those clubs. White people can work the same way by inviting the Indians to join their organizations and work with them. An Indian has to be invited. He isn't going to barge in on people, unwanted.

Daisey Bird: Like you say, let's tear that sagebrush curtain down. In my opinion, we Indians sitting here in this room, all over the State of Nevada, in fact all over the United States, we ought to be glad that we're Indians, and that our forefathers walked this United States before the white man. But still, we have

(Daisey Bird, Continued)

to go along with the white man's law because he gives us education, and that's what we're calling for--education. Do you agree with me?

Syble Rupert: Yes.

Daisey Bird: If we educate our children they'll be more free. And we can't say the white man is taking our rights away from us.

Syble Rupert: The way I feel about it is, we'll have to educate ourselves. The people go to meetings, but they don't get up and talk. We find that in our own tribal councils. We'll have a crowd, but we ask a question and we get no response. That's where it's got to begin, in our own tribal councils. If you can get the people to get up and talk in your own tribal meetings, it's going to be much easier for them to get up and talk in a PTA meeting or other meeting. It has to start someplace.

Nick Jackson: I think something rather amusing was brought up just a second ago, and that's the Indian right to vote. You people represent some 8,000 people within the State; enough to elect a Senator or not to elect a Senator, or kick him out of office. I don't suggest that you use this as a political organization, but you could have a tremendous lobby within the State.

Donal O'Callaghan: A little while ago, someone said he didn't know what the truth was. I have a file that thick in my office. The ideas are a little bit different all through this file. I found one way of finding out what the truth was. I contacted people like Stannard Frank and people like this, and I found out that the only consistency among all the correspondence was from the Indians themselves. The Indians have something to say. When you go out on the reservations and talk with them or have them in your own home, you find out that they have a great deal to say. I was in a group this afternoon, and in an hour only four Indians spoke up.

(Donal O'Callaghan, Continued)

The Indians weren't talking. This afternoon in here, in a bigger group, they have spoken up. I hope they do the same thing in the individual groups tomorrow, because you can do even more in a small group. If discussion would continue as it has for the last hour, people like myself would learn something.

Martin Levine: I think the major point raised is do express yourselves. The only way we're going to get to know the situation better, be realistic about it, or arrive at any kind of agreement or sense of community or effectiveness, is to have both Indian and non-Indian say his piece. The more people who say it, the better off we are. And, as Mr. O'Callaghan says, the way you talk at home is the way to talk here.

Ray Mills: The Indians always had a strong organization years back, and they had a good communications system. Today that communications system exists, but not the organization. In order to get it to the Indian himself, they're knocking on the Indian's head, and trying to ram things down his throat. Now I think that's the wrong approach.

There's another well-known approach that most of us Indians know, and that's from the Indian himself. Right from the source, right where we're trying to hit--the Indian himself.

Now the Indians should organize themselves. I think that the Indian Bureau should not interfere with the organization of Indian groups. The Indians themselves should do it. And once they get that, then I think from there on you can get a little bit better communication. When that happens, I think the Indian can meet anybody halfway, and he'll be receptive to anybody's views.

Now there are Indians right here in town that I know of that are capable of doing a lot of these things. I think once that is done, the Indians

(Ray Mills, Continued)

will bring their problems out, and you can deal with them from there on. But our efforts at organizing some of these people have been hampered; I mean both through the Indian Service and within the people themselves sometimes, because there is a doubt. Now whenever there is any element of suspicion you'll never be able to get anything done. And I think the way to break that element of suspicion is to start from the Indian himself. Let him do those things himself. The way we've been approaching this, I believe, is from the top, when we should start from the bottom and come up from there. And I think that will break the barrier

Unidentified Participant: The speaker just stated that the Indians have a communications system, but lack organization. Would you care to describe this communications system? I'm unaware of it.

Ray Mills: You may know it as a grapevine, and the Indians have other words for it. When there is a meeting in Austin or Battle Mountain or someplace and the Indians decide on it, three or four days later they all know about it, I don't know how it happens. We've put ads in the paper and over television, and we don't get any response, but the other way you can get them there.

Daisey Bird: We can select our delegates, we can send them. How do we know what this delegate is supposed to say? From my opinion, I think all the groups, no matter who they may be representing, Paiutes, Washoe, Shoshone, must make up their minds on their own. But on the other hand we've got to explain things in our own tongue, I think in that manner we can get along. We represent them, but we don't know what's on their minds. So we have to cooperate with our own people, sit down and talk to them and give them understanding. I think that's the way we have to work this matter out, from my opinion. Thank you.

Warren d'Azevedo: There is one comment that Mr. Mills made that interested me very much.

(Warren d'Azevedo, Continued)

I think he pointed out earlier that one of the problems has to do with communication. As he said, there is an Indian grapevine which is extremely effective, as I'm sure many of us know. There is also a kind of grapevine among the non-Indians. I think one of the things this conference has pointed out is that there is dissension among non-Indians as well as Indians. But it would seem to me that Indians might like to think about actual factionalism and differences of opinion among the whites. It's very easy to think about the dominant, non-Indian authority as monolithic, that is, that they all agree. I think this conference has demonstrated that this is not true. I have my own opinions and I'm sure everybody else feels that way, too. That, I think, is one of the basic kinds of learning about communication that conferences like this offer. And I hope, to answer Mr. Mills, that various Indian groups will realize that they have just as much opportunity to manipulate non-Indians as non-Indians have had for 100 or more years to manipulate Indians.

Unidentified Participant: Earlier in the session I understood Mr. Mills to say that the Inter-Tribal Newsletter printed reports that were available to the tribal councils and its members. Is he now saying that he prefers the grapevine to this kind of reporting?

Ray Mills: No, I believe that the Indian should have a right to say what he wants in the Inter-Tribal Newsletter.

Robert Bauer: In context with Dr. d'Azevedo's remarks, I should like to bring before this group a comment by a newspaper reporter, Mr. Wilson. He has attended our session, and has attended many, many city council and other similar meetings. He pointed out that if the sessions of tribal councils were attended by interested members of the community, the Indian community would be that much further ahead of the whites, who never seem to attend their own council meetings.

Martin Levine: I wonder if part of the problem is that we're trying to break into these grapevines. These are inner, rather than inter communications. Perhaps the grapevine creates a lot of mystery and misunderstanding for the group not included in the system. I think curiosity doesn't help understanding, and it makes for a lot of conjecture. So, I think what we're trying to do here is bring the grapevine out into the open, then talk it over, and try to decide something about it. Once I hear about problems, I am not only interested but involved. I think this is true of many people.

Wayne Suttles: While I'm an outsider to Nevada, I've spent the last 12 years in British Columbia where I am fairly well acquainted with the Indian situation. It appeared to me after some period of observation that there the reserves, the band councils, chiefs, etc., are in fact official units imposed from the outside by the government, and that there is in addition a different kind of social organization, one which the Indians themselves are only partly aware of, non-Indians wholly unaware of. Now I wonder if Mr. Mills' reference to the grapevine doesn't refer to the same kind of a situation here. If it does, I suggest that this social organization, which is apart from the reservation system, should be explored and exploited by the Indians themselves, I suppose, as a basis for some kind of action.

Ray Mills: That has been going on for about 100 years. If nothing has been done in that time, why exploit it any more, especially by the Indians themselves?

Wayne Suttles: Well, I'm agreeing with you. You're saying, I think, that the grapevine is something that can be depended upon.

Ray Mills: I think it's dependable.

Wayne Suttles: Well, I suggest that the grapevine is only one aspect of something which could be used by Indians.

Ray Mills: What should be exploited is the grapevine itself, not what they have been trying to force on the Indians for 100 years.

Daisey Bird: I disagree. I think Indian people should stay away from the grapevine and go to their meetings and know for themselves what we're discussing.

Dewey Sampson: Many of the councils don't go along with what the members of the reservations or colonies want. They've taken matters in their own hands, and that's been hurting our people. Instead of going along with the ideas that have been brought up by the members of those reservations, they go along in a different channel, which makes a lot of difference, not only in communication but in everything else. What are delegates supposed to convey to these various meetings? Some of the delegates to the Inter-Tribal Council were not even appointed or accredited by their people. Now our people want to know a little bit more about this Inter-Tribal Council; how it was organized, and who's supposed to be represented. I think there's no better place to find out exactly where we stand. I think those things ought to be thrashed out before we make any decision this afternoon about making any resolution or any comment from this conference. We know that we need such a conference, but it should be a conference made of Indians themselves--Indian representatives, that's what we want. Then I believe we can go a long ways, we can be free to face anyone. I don't know how our colony has been dragged into the thing. And those things I think we ought to get thrashed out.

Delbert Howard: Mr. Chairman, I wish to make some points clear concerning the Inter-Tribal Council. My name is Delbert Howard. I'm from Winnemucca. Throughout 1963, interest was sparked in an informal meeting of the representatives of some of the Nevada Indian groups. A series of meetings was held: in Stewart in September, Schurz in November, and Winnemucca in December. Most Indian groups applauded the

(Delbert Howard, Continued)

idea for an Inter-Tribal Council for Nevada. Some groups were not represented at all of our meetings, but someone from all the major tribes and colonies attended at least one of these meetings. Therefore, we believe that everyone had a chance to be heard, to express their views.

The Constitutional Convention met at Winnemucca on December 7.

The formation of the Inter-Tribal Council in other states, such as Arizona, New Mexico and Idaho, etc., has been of direct benefit to the participating tribes. For example, in Arizona the Inter-Tribal Council has brought a problem of common concern to the attention of the Arizona Congressional Delegation. This has resulted in favorable legislation for Indians. One of our proposed projects in Nevada is to initiate a voter education program, which will make Indian citizens aware of the power of their votes at local, state and national levels.

We believe thoroughly that only through cooperative, factual programs of mutual understanding with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, with state, county and municipal governments, can we realize overall achievements for our programs for the benefit of all Nevada Indians. It is with this in mind that the Inter-Tribal Council Executive Committee has voted to incorporate within the laws of the State of Nevada.

For those who do not know, these are the purposes and the goals that the Inter-Tribal Council has set: 1) to secure for our people the rights and benefits which should adhere to them pursuant to treaties and all legal and moral and equitable undertakings of the U. S. Government; 2) to preserve and protect Indian cultural values and heritage, and at the same time increase the understanding of our people and secure their fuller participation in the institutions of free government in the state and communities in

(Delbert Howard, Continued)

the state and communities in which they live; 3) to secure and promote the general welfare and education of our people, and their full employment, and the excercise of all the privileges of citizenship in the United States; 4) to hasten and improve the education of our people, and equality of instruction and facilities with other citizens, and; 5) to enlighten the public with respect to Indian affairs, and to promote a better understanding between the Indians and their fellow citizens of Nevada and the United States.

It is with these facts in mind that I urge all people to explore for themselves the standpoints and the viewpoints of the Inter-Tribal Council, and its most vital concern with respect to Nevada Indians. And with this, I close. I hope that some of you people here today have a new outlook concerning the Inter-Tribal Council.

John Dressler: I'm the chairman of the Inter-Tribal Council in the State of Nevada. I'm from the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, as a good many of you know. We have urged the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony to join the Inter-Tribal Council. For lack of interest or perhaps from persuasion by some other people, they are not members of the Inter-Tribal Council. Perhaps I should not have been listed as a representative of the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, but only as an interested person of Reno. But nevertheless, I feel like wholeheartedly supporting my people. I felt I had a duty to do. I submitted my ability, what little I have, in support of the Inter-Tribal organization. I have tried to get the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony to support this Inter-Tribal Council. I was selected as temporary chairman, and I felt I should go along with it. I've been in the organization from the very beginning. Thanks for your time.

Dewey Sampson: Is there any fee that you have to pay? An informative statement that was made

(Dewey Sampson, Continued)

in one of the meetings was that some Indian groups didn't have enough money to join. Also, they've had a lot of other problems confronting them, and they didn't feel they wanted to be involved in any other organization until all these other serious matters had not only come before our local colonies, but the Paiute Indians of the State. We feel that until those things are solved, then we can't go onto something like this.

I'm not objecting to an Indian organization that would hold its head up high and really work for their people. I know what it entails: a lot of thinking, fearing that you might make the wrong move, that your statements will backfire.

Daisey Bird: We felt that John Dressler was doing the best he could for our people; that's why we elected him Chairman.

Martin Levine: I think part of this brings out that there are some matters that are entirely Indian in nature. Maybe some of this has to be cleared up first by the Indians.

Syble Rupert: The fee for membership in the Inter-Tribal Council is $25 per year for each organization that wishes to join. That does not mean per head--that means per organization.

Gus Garity: I've been a delegate to the Idaho Inter-Tribal Council for some years. Their fee is $60. The organization has a lot of responsibilities financially--correspondence, and typewriters and things like that. I think your $25 isn't going to hurt anybody. It's for the benefit of the organization to transact their business, and pay for stamps, correspondence, paper and all office facilities. So I'm just reporting that we have to pay $60, and we don't gripe about it.

C. Indians and Legislation

1. Reports by small group session representatives, Indians and Legislation

a. Dewey Sampson (May 1)

Our discussion was about Indian claims. We didn't accomplish too much because we had quite a controversy in there. We couldn't come to any conclusion. There are many important matters to decide before we can make any recommendations. More of you people who are interested should come to the discussion tomorrow. Then maybe we could make up a resolution or something to this effect.

b. Donald Wade (May 1)

I'll have a few words to say to my people. I didn't make notations of anything because that's beyond my knowledge. I'm one of the Washoe tribe. This is my first time to talk over a microphone like this. I'm glad to be here to talk to you people, I know you are one kind. We're all one kind, white and Indian. In our discussion we talked about the Indian claims. Some of the people from the reservation have misunderstood the Court of Claims rules. They thought that as soon as they were paid off, they were to be terminated; that they would have to pay taxes on their property. But we learn that it isn't so, it doesn't take any termination at all. We can still hold our reservations and allotments and trust land, and so far they can be tax exempt, which I have learned today. I believe we Washoes know what's going on and our attorney always brings good news to us.

That's something to be seen yet, if there were a good judgment some day, that we might have a little money, sufficient to do something. It might not be so. We don't know until it's been paid--until we get our judgment, because we don't know how much we're going to get. But we hope that we get something some day. And I

(Donald Wade, Continued)

believe there is a limitation to that too; they can't hold the Court forever for us to present our Court of Claims. There must be a deadline somewhere along there. We're supposed to make some kind of resolution tomorrow.

One thing, the State of Nevada has a good law. The Indians of Nevada have a fishing and hunting free license. So that's one thing Nevada Indians should hang on to, that's their right. It's a lot of help to people that have families that cannot afford to buy licenses. So along that line we will have to draw up some kind of resolution and talk to our representatives, our State Legislators to protect our right. If we don't speak up, why it might not be known. We might not be on the map. But we are still on the map. Like I say, I am one of the Washoe tribe. This county is named after the Washoe. Along this line here I know nearly all the Washoe people in my territory, because there are just a handful of them. And I was one of the enrolling committee to enroll our people. We still enroll them, newly-born children. Those that pass on, we take them off the roll. We discuss this and make a resolution to approve, by the Council. We know our people, who they are. If the Government enrolling agents come out here, they are going to ask the Indian anyway, "Who is that?". We know who they are by their grandfather and parents' name. There are a few cases that we couldn't solve. There are a few of them that we don't know the name, they were Indians from outside Nevada or California from distant areas. We don't know the names. Every Indian group or community should enroll their own people because they know one another. They know who they are. The agent or whoever is appointed by the Government is going to ask us anyway who the people are, so if we do the enrolling ourselves, we would be better off, because we know our people, who they are.

c. Dewey Sampson (May 2)

The Committee on Legislation did not come up with any resolution. However, we felt that the knowledge gained here today would be taken home by those participating, and have them thrash out those things, and take it up with their respective councils, and inform the members of their reservation what has taken place.

2. Discussion (May 1 and 2), Indians and Legislation

a. Background of the Claims Cases

(1) The Washoe Case

George Wright: A judgment of the Government's liability was rendered in 1960. Last spring the case was tried in Washington on the issue of damages. The Washington attorneys are now briefing the case. The Government will submit its brief by July 1, it is hoped. Then the Claims Commission will decide the case.

(2) The Western Shoshone Case

George Wright: The judgment of the Government's liability was issued in 1962, and the appraisers have submitted bids for estimating the damages, or value of the land. In about a year, a trial will be held on the question of the amount of the Government's liability.

Judge Milton Badt: I am just auditing this meeting. I wanted to attend yesterday but our court was in session and it was impossible for me to attend. What I am saying now is probably only of historical interest. I would like to trace a little bit of the Shoshone litigation. We're a year beyond the centennial of the 1863 Shoshone treaties. Now I don't say that I was involved in that litigation for all 100 years, but I was in it for about half of that 100 years, and that's a long time. That was long before

(Judge Milton Badt, Continued)

the establishment by Congress of the Indian Claims Commission. In those days we had to attempt to get Congress to pass what was known as a jurisdictional act to permit a suit against the United States. In pursuing that course for a great number of years, we acted through our representatives in Congress. That goes back to Congressman Scrugham, Senator Oddie and men like that. You can see it goes back a long, long time.

Well, we did accomplish a lot in those days, but we didn't get through before the Indian Claims Commission was organized and authorized by Congress. But we got to the point of recognition by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (which was helping us and sometimes hurting us, all through this embryo effort to get something done) that our causes of action, the Western Shoshone treaties, were not treaties of cession, but merely treaties of peace and friendship, and that the Shoshones had never ceded their lands to the Government. So then we proceeded from there. We had a lot of incidental, introductory and fundamental things to establish first.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs insisted (in accordance with other acts and other determinations by the U. S. Supreme Court confirming or overruling the Court of Claims) that full compensation must be made to the Indians. We were killed with kindness, as it were, because the Bureau of Indian Affairs insisted that full compensation meant interest, and this was interest from the time of taking. Now you can see that would have more than doubled the claim, and Congress would never pass a bill of that kind, unless they limited interest to the period of the statute of limitations. So there we were. Finally, however, the Indian Claims Commission was formed, and the Shoshone claims were presented to that Commission.

(Judge Milton Badt, Continued)

Now comes the question of whether the attorneys failed to communicate the progress of that litigation. I was in it for a good many years. When I went to the bench, naturally I couldn't act as counsel anymore, and I stepped out of it. So for the last 17 years this litigation has been handled by other counsels, mainly Wilkinson, Cragun and Barker. Finally, it has progressed to the point where the briefs have been accepted, and findings of fact and conclusions of law made to the effect that the Indians are entitled to compensation for the lands the Government took, comprising 24 million acres of land.

Now that took a long time to get to that. The claim of exclusive right to these 24 million acres was a long, hard road to prove, and the identification of the territory was a long, hard road.

I remember at one time I was called to Washington. They said the only thing left was to identify this land with a modern map. Finally, through the efforts of Wilkinson, Cragun and Barker, the original Doty map that accompanied all these treaties was found in the archivist's office in Washington, D. C.

The location of the following places was established by the map: Po-ho-no-be (the east boundary of the Shoshone country, also referred to in the treaty as Steptoe Valley and the Great Salt Lake Valley); Wong-goga-da (the Wong-goga-da Mountains formed the north boundary); Wi-tua-gua; Su-non-to-yah (the name given to the Smith Creek Mountains, the western boundary); and Wi-co-bah (defining the Colorado desert as the south boundary).

The date of the taking of the Shoshone lands, and the value of the land at the time of the taking are the only two issues

(Judge Milton Badt, Continued)

left to be determined. When the amount of compensation is determined, it isn't the function of the attorneys to say how that compensation is to be paid. That is with Congress and with the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

It has been said that lack of communication promotes suspicion. That's so true. And if that communication has not been made, then our attorneys, our successors, have been at fault. But it should be understood that from that point on it is up to Congress and to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to determine.

It may be land, it may be monies going to the council, it may be monies going to individuals--that is not within the function of the attorneys to determine, but simply how much compensation is to be paid by the U. S. for taking these lands.

I think that Wilkinson, Cragun and Barker have sent a message, because I got a copy of it, to the various councils. That is the situation of the Western Shoshones. I've been out of it for 17 years, so as I say, this was merely historical. Thank you.

Martin Levine: I do want to point out that lack of communication promotes suspicion, but suspicion also promotes lack of communication.

You talk. You win your stand. But the element of suspicion prevents you from arriving at any agreement. The perpetuation of factionalism has its roots in a lot of ill feeling, and this ill feeling is at the bottom of the lack of communications. The element of suspicion is there. It has to be worked with all the time. I hope that this Conference reduces suspicion to some extent. After the Conference we plan to publish a record of what happened here. Perhaps this will help to inform people of the issues and allay suspicion.

(3) The Northern Paiute Case

Robert Leland: The Northern Paiutes are suing the Government for the value of lands and other things taken away without just compensation years ago. The suit was brought under the Indian Claims Commission law by six Northern Paiute tribes and a number of individual Northern Paiutes.

This law allows Indians to sue the Government for specific things. It does not allow them to sue for the return of the land. It provides that the Indians be paid the value of the property at the time it was taken, not present-day value. Although the property was taken away nearly 100 years ago, the law does not allow payment of interest on the value since that time.

The Government did not have to pass this law. Conquering nations rarely compensate a conquered people for lands taken away. However, the people of the United States, through their Congressional representatives, decided to make this partial restitution to Indians. No one pretends that the judgments under the Claims Commission compensate the Indians 100% for what was taken away from them.

The area for which the Northern Paiutes are seeking compensation is partly in western Nevada, partly in southern Oregon and partly in eastern California.

The attorneys for the Northern Paiutes argued that 55 million acres had been taken away from these Indians. The Government argued that a much smaller area had been taken. After hearing testimony from both sides, the Commission decided that the Northern Paiutes should be paid for about 25 million acres.

(Robert Leland, Continued)

The Commission divided the land area into three separate sections. The boundaries of the three areas do not touch. The Commission felt there was insufficient evidence of exclusive use by the Northern Paiutes to establish that they should be compensated for the lands in between the three areas.

Thus, in the Northern Paiute case, the issue of the Government's liability already has been settled. In addition, the value of one of the three areas (the Snake Tract) has been established, and the money has been appropriated by Congress. This will be discussed in more detail later.

The value of the other two areas (the Paviotso and Mono Tracts) has not yet been established.

The Northern Paiute case is in many ways more complicated than the Washoe case, for example. Instead of one tribe and one tribal council, a great many separate groups are involved. In addition to the organized tribes, there are many Northern Paiutes who no longer live on reservations, or have any ties there. It is difficult to get agreement among these diverse groups. Many of the differences of opinion which result from the varied viewpoints of those involved have come out during our discussions.

Area III: This is the northernmost of the three areas. It sometimes is referred to as the "Snake Tract". Fort Bidwell and Cedarville, California; and Summit Lake and Fort McDermitt, Nevada, are included in this tract.

The attorneys for the Northern Paiutes and those for the Government negotiated a settlement, which was approved by the original petitioners, and the Claims Commission. In 1961, Congress appropriated $3,650,000

(Robert Leland, Continued)

to pay for Area III. The money was deposited in the U. S. Treasury, where it is drawing interest at 4%. The interest earned so far has been just about equal to the fees paid to the attorneys for their 15 years work, and the amount paid the appraisers. So you still have $3,650,000, and the amount will grow each year it is on deposit. The next step is for the Indians involved to agree on a plan for the disbursement and use of the money. This will be proposed to Congress. Then the money can be spent.

Area II: This area is called the "Paviotso Tract", and includes a large area in the center of Nevada. The acreage for which compensation is to be paid already has been settled, with the approval of the petitioners. The amount to be paid for the land has not yet been settled.

Unlike Area III, a settlement on the value of the land could not be negotiated. A decision from the Claims Commission is required. The attorneys for the Northern Paiutes say the Indians should be paid for the value of minerals of the Comstock Lode. The Government disagrees. Therefore, the difference between the two estimates of value is too great to be compromised.

The Claims Commission probably will reach a decision on the value of this area in 1965.

Area I: This is the southern part of the Case around Owens Valley, and is called the "Mono Tract". The situation here is the same as in Area II, except that there still is some possibility that a settlement can be negotiated.

b. Area III Settlement, Northern Paiute Claims Case

Dewey Sampson: Why was the Northern Paiute Area divided into three parts? We were all one people.

Robert Leland: The Claims Commission found from the testimony that the value of the land differed greatly among the three areas. The main reason for this was the issue of the valuable minerals of the Comstock Lode, which made Area II potentially more valuable than the others. The Commission decided a separate appraisal was required for each area. Therefore, for convenience in settling the value of the lands, the Commission considered each one separately.

Dewey Sampson: Why did they leave out those stretches of land between the three areas? If this land didn't belong to the Indians before the white man came, who did it belong to?

Robert Leland: Under the law which allowed you to sue, it is not enough to show that the lands in question belonged to Indians. Obviously, all the land in the United States once belonged to Indians. The particular group bringing suit has to prove that it had exclusive use and occupancy. In the case of the so-called "no man's lands" between the three areas of the Northern Paiute case, the Court found there was insufficient evidence to prove exclusive use by the Northern Paiutes. Other Indian groups used the same land, the Court found after weighing the contradictory testimony. Therefore, under the law, the Northern Paiutes could not be compensated for this land.

Ray Mills: It doesn't seem fair to decide that since more than one tribe used an area, it didn't belong to any of them. All should share in the compensation for the land.

Johnnie Lundy: The land should be evaluated and the money should be divided between the tribes involved.

Harry Sampson: We are involved in the Paiute suit. I'm one of the plaintiffs. Now, you talk about these anthropologists. We want to question these anthropologists if they ever come out here. We want to find out who's their informant. Because I find out that they pick so and so that do not know the characteristics of our people, our environments. They say we own certain land here in Washoe County. These anthropologists think that we used to get the medicinal plants on the desert, so there they cut the line. They don't know that these Sierra Nevada Mountains contain the food that our ancestors gathered. They think the food that we get grows out in the desert.

Robert Leland: Whether it is right or not, the Commission has decided the Northern Paiutes should not be paid for these lands. These areas in between were not the only lands disallowed by the courts. Some lands around the edge, which your attorneys claimed had been yours, were judged by the Court not to have belonged exclusively to the Northern Paiutes. Your expert witness claimed 55 million acres were taken from you. The Commission ruled that only 25 million had been exclusively used and occupied by Northern Paiutes.

The Northern Paiute petitioners agreed to accept the decisions of the Commission. It is too bad you didn't get all you asked for, but it is too late to argue that part of it. Some of the people who now complain about this decision actually signed the acceptance. The attorneys met with the tribes, explained the offer made by the Government, and the tribes decided to accept.

This settlement was a compromise. If you sue someone for running into your car, you may ask for $10,000. The court may give you only $5,000. You don't think it's enough. The man

(Robert Leland, Continued)

you sue thinks it's too much. Even though you aren't completely satisfied, you may decide you'd rather take the $5,000 than have the trouble and expense of appealing the decision to a higher court. Or you may decide to appeal, if you think the court was wrong and you have a chance of getting more by appealing than the appeal would cost you.

In this case, the Government probably thinks the Commission agreed to compensate you for too much land. You think you are being compensated for too little. In court cases, the Claims Commission is just another court, neither party is ever fully satisfied. But a good many Northern Paiutes decided they would be better off to accept the decision than to appeal.

Dewey Sampson: There's a lot of people who never knew how the compromise in Area III came about. They say there are several thousand Northern Paiutes. They should have a chance to say whether they like this decision or not.

Robert Leland: It would be ideal if all Northern Paiutes could participate in these decisions. But it doesn't work out that way. Look at the non-Indians. How many of them actually take an active part in their government? A few active people take the initiative. If they didn't, nothing would happen. On the other hand, they usually get criticized. You never get 100% agreement from a large group of people.

Six tribes and a number of individuals filed the suit. If they had not, there would be no claims case. They had the foresight to find out about the law, hire attorneys, and work hard to get the suit going. Naturally, since they are the ones who filed suit, the attorneys asked their opinion. However, in this case, all Northern Paiutes were welcome to attend the meeting to discuss the Government's offer. And many of them did--at least 400 as

(Robert Leland, Continued)

I recall. That was the time to protest, if you didn't like the decision. If you were not at the meeting, or if you were there and didn't speak your mind, it's your own fault if you're not satisfied now.

It is quite true that personal invitations were not issued to all the individual Northern Paiutes to attend the meeting. We don't even know who they are yet. The Court could not wait two years for the Northern Paiutes to run down all the individuals and ask their opinion to find out whether or not the Northern Paiutes accepted or rejected the Government's offer. Invitations were issued to all the organized groups involved. It was their responsibility to advise their members to attend. It is also true that the non-reservation Indians were not organized, so there was no way to notify them.

Unidentified Participant: If the Government already has paid for Area III, why haven't the Indians got the money yet?

John Pappan: The Claims Commission has awarded $3,650,000 for Area III. No program for distribution of that money has been agreed upon as yet. The Bureau of Indian Affairs is thinking of drafting proposed legislation concerning eligibility and method of distribution. Meetings will be held with the groups involved to decide what is desirable.

c. Docket 87A, Northern Paiute Claims Case

Alyce Williams: They told us there was a Docket 87A in the offing. Well, there is no Docket 87A. We sold our land. We can't go back now and ask for payment for our minerals or hunting rights or anything else. In that Final Findings of Fact from Washington it says from here on out, you have lost all rights with this piece of paper--all of your rights are gone as Indians. I think our Indians should be aware of this.

Robert Leland: Unfortunately, a lot of misinformation is circulated among Indian people by Indian people. Mrs. Williams states that there is "no such thing as Docket 87A". This is simply untrue. It is not a question of opinion, but of fact. If a person wants to find out whether or not there is such a case, he doesn't have to believe the attorneys or the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He can ask the Claims Commission. He will find out that Docket 87A was filed in 1957. I have copies of it. I have offered to give copies to Mrs. Williams and to others who say there is no such case.

Many of you are probably wondering what this case, 87A, is all about. In addition to losing lands, Indians have suffered other wrongs. When the white people took over, the Indians in many cases lost their water rights, their fishing and hunting rights, the value of minerals and (in some cases) timber, and other things.

In many of the claims cases, such as the Washoe, the Indians have sued for compensation for these things and the land in the same case. In the Northern Paiute case, the attorneys thought it would be more advantageous to the Indian people to separate the two. Docket 87 is the suit for the value of the land. In addition, there is Docket 87A, in which we ask for compensation for the many wrongs they have suffered in addition to the loss of their land.

I think I know where Mrs. Williams gets the idea that there is no such thing as Docket 87A. I would like to read a section from the Area III settlement.

> "Entry of final judgment of this basis shall finally dispose of all rights, claims or demands which said petitioners or any of them, or any group or groups thereof, have asserted with respect to said tract [Area III] described in Finding 23, and also with respect to any other tract of land north of the forty-first parallel and latitude; and said petitioners, and each of them, and each group thereof,

(Robert Leland, Continued)

> shall be barred thereby from asserting any such rights, claims or demands against defendant in any other or future action or actions."
>
> "The petitioner, Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe of the Fort McDermitt Indian Reservation, and the other petitioners in Docket No. 87, agree to, and do hereby eliminate from their suit in said Docket any and all claims which they or any of them, or any group or groups thereof, have or may have for compensation with respect to the tract of land described in Section 2 of the Act of Congress of April 4, 1960, Public Law 96-401, 86th Congress; and, in any event renounce any and all claims which they or any of them, or any group or groups thereof, have or may have for compensation with respect to said tract."

This says that after accepting payment for the land in Area III, the Indians can't make any further claim for payment for it. There is nothing unusual about this. The purpose of going to court is to settle a case. If you accept the offered settlement, naturally you can't go back next year and sue again for payment for the same thing.

But, acceptance of settlement for the land in Area III in no way interferes with the separate suit (Docket 87A) for payment for the other things the Northern Paiutes, including Area III, lost, as proved by the fact that the claim for compensation for these things is on file. This is a matter of public record which anyone can verify for himself.

As soon as the land case is settled for Areas II and I, the attorneys will go forward with the other case, Docket 87A.

Dewey Sampson: Do I understand you to say that they are going to settle 87A first?

Robert Leland: No, I said just the opposite.

Dewey Sampson: Does 87A pertain to Area III?

Robert Leland: It pertains to the whole claim.

d. Appeal

John Eckert: If the Indians are not satisfied with the settlement, is it binding, or can the amount be raised if there are inequities?

George Wright: As I understand it, the Northern Paiutes have accepted the settlement for Area III. So this can not be appealed. Now, when the Government offers a settlement for Area II and Area I, if the Indians aren't satisfied they can appeal to the U. S. Court of Claims and then to the U. S. Supreme Court. The appeal would have to be based on the written record, not on new evidence.

Enos Francisco: If the Papago are not satisfied with the award and should decide to appeal, would they have to wait as long for the appeal trial as they have had to wait for the first one? Would there be danger that it would never be considered?

George Wright: You would have to wait your turn, and it probably would take quite a while.

Warren d'Azevedo: Does the Washoe case, as it is now constituted, allow for reopening of fishing and other matters, after the present case is settled?

George Wright: No. In the Washoe case, the land and the other claims are all covered in one case, Dockett 288. The fishing rights and all those things are coming up together. We have asked special damages for loss of fishing, hunting, minerals, timber and other resources along with the land. We are handling this as one unified claim. The attorneys for the Northern Paiutes have handled these things separately. Those for the Washoe have not.

Warren d'Azevedo: So settlement of the Washoe case precludes any further raising of issues with regard to rights.

George Wright: Yes. As in any lawsuit, when you've settled an issue, and don't appeal, it becomes final. There must be an end to litigation someday. But, as in the Northern Paiute case, if you have two different cases pending for different kinds of things, and one case is held in abeyance to await the decision of the other case, settlement of the first case for the lands wouldn't have any effect on the other. However, in the Washoe case, we have taken it up as one case.

Warren d'Azevedo: I am asking if new evidence could cause certain aspects of the case to be reopened.

George Wright: It would be an unusual case where additional evidence would be considered. The only basis would be a broad issue, that the case wasn't tried right, or fraud.

Robert Leland: I would like to point out some things that might be helpful to the Indian people in reaching a decision on whether or not to appeal.

When the trial is over the claims attorneys will meet with the tribes to discuss the settlement that is offered. If, after these discussions and careful thought, you decide not to accept, the judgment can be appealed.

The decision on whether or not to appeal is a very difficult one. You have to decide what you risk losing, and weigh it against what you stand to gain. If you appeal, you run the following risks:

(1) The court might decide it made a mistake in the first decision and gave you credit for too much. Thus, you could end up being awarded compensation for less than you were given by the first decision.

(Robert Leland, Continued)

(2) The cost of the appeal might be greater than the additional amount, if any, you receive. To appeal takes time and time costs money. The original cases have taken 15 years to try. You might eventually get a better decision from the court, but in the meantime you lose the use of the money. You all know what interest is. And you know what inflation is.

As soon as the case is settled and the money is put in the Treasury, you start to earn interest. Or, you may invest in tribal or individual enterprises from which you would get a return on the money.

When you appeal, you put off the day when you will get the money. If you were very lucky, your appeal might be settled in one year (that is very unlikely). You might be awarded 4% more than you were offered in the first place. You might think that is pretty good. But is it? If you had taken the money first offered, you would have earned 4% on it in the same amount of time, and without the additional expenses of the appeal. Also, there is the chance if you had taken the first offer and invested it wisely, you might have earned 5% or 6%.

The attorneys are paid a percentage of the award. Naturally, after 15 years, they are anxious to be paid for their work. However, you can be sure that if they believed there were any chance for the Indian people (and consequently themselves) to gain substantially by an appeal, they would recommend that you do so. But they would have to be convinced the appeal would result in a net gain. In the Area III matter, your attorneys evaluated the situation. They did not believe you had been awarded damages for all the land which once was rightfully yours. Nevertheless, they thought you would come out better in the long run if you decided to accept the amount offered, than you would if you appealed. The question was presented to the

(Robert Leland, Continued)

tribes, and they agreed to accept the offer. (The Sampsons were among those who agreed.)

In the Northern Paiute case, there are two things on which you have agreed in the settlement and can no longer appeal: the amount of land taken from you, and the value of Area III. You will still face the decision on whether or not to accept the offer made for the value of Area II and Area I.

e. Distribution of the Judgement Funds

Unidentified Participant: How will the money be distributed?

George Wright: The different tribes have handled the funds in different ways. It should be primarily for the Indians themselves to determine exactly how the money should be disbursed. After the amount of the Government's liability has been determined, Congress appropriates the money. The money is held in the U. S. Treasury, while the tribes and the Bureau work out a program for its use. This is proposed as legislation and an Act of Congress is then passed governing use of the money. Some Indians want the money paid to individuals. Some tribes want to handle the money as a trust fund. Others are considering a combination of the two.

If you people will take care of your money the Government will turn it over to you and you can have more control over it. But I don't imagine the Government likes to see the Indians dissipate the money. So I think that you Indians are going to have to get together in your meetings and show that you are able to take care of the money, and that you have some projects for it. The more you do along those lines, and show stability, the more control you're going to have over your funds.

Ray Mills: How many Indians will share in the Northern Paiute case?

John Pappan: This information has not yet been gathered. The rules for eligibility must be worked out before it can be determined who is entitled to share.

George Wright: It is estimated that from 1700 to 2000 Washoes will share in the Washoe judgment.

Ray Mills: Who determines what percent of Indian blood is required for eligibility to share in the judgment?

George Wright: In the Washoe case, the Washoes themselves are making a recommendation on this, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs will consider it in drafting legislation. In reality, the individual Indian hasn't much to say about it, except as he makes his opinion known to his council.

Ray Mills: What about children who are born off the reservation?

George Wright: If the parents are members, it shouldn't matter whether the child is born on or off the reservation.

Stannard Frank: You mean, whether you are born on or off the reservation, you can share in the clain?

George Wright: That is the general opinion of the Washoe, but it is for each group to recommend the rules for their own cases.

Donald Wade: The Washoe enrolled the Washoe people no matter where they live. They know who their own people are. All those who are 1/4 or more Washoe are eligible. People off the reservation were enrolled, as well as those who live there. A deadline was set.

Ray Mills: Will the Washoe have their own elections on the claims case, or will the Bureau rule on who can vote?

George Wright: The general rule is that the Indian councils make their recommendations in the form of resolutions and send them to the Bureau.

Dewey Sampson: Over in California, the election wasn't left up to the Indians. They were asked to make a decision 15 minutes after the lawyers got there. People didn't know what they were voting on, and the Bureau was in charge of the election. Even the Chairman was from the Bureau. Indians didn't get a chance to interpret for their people. People were shoved off the platform.

George Wright: I think you're going to have to have meetings of the Council and the Indians to determine what you're going to do, make resolutions and recommendations to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which will review the matter and send a recommendation to Congress for a special act. The Paiutes should arrange an annual picnic to discuss these things, as the Washoe do.

John Eckert: What happens to the individual Indian who has no reservation? What representation has he?

George Wright: If he no longer lives on the reservation, he should find out through his friends and the Council what is going on. They should not be left out of the recovery because they are unable to attend tribal meetings.

Ray Mills: There are Indians who are not recognized as members of tribes by the tribes themselves, yet they are Indians. There is no one for them to go to. These Indians have nothing to say about the outcome of the case. It is not just a question of not living on the reservation. They are not members of any organized group, yet they are Northern Paiutes. We've tried to get these people organized. The Indians don't want the Bureau of Indian Affairs to interfere. It must let the people do it themselves.

Harvey Cracker: Some McDermitt people are descendants of Malheur people. Can they share in the Malheur claim, and in the Paiute claim, and the others, too? I have relations in Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming and California.

George Wright: In discussions with people in Washington, (the attorneys, the Bureau of Indian Affairs) and with the Nevada Indian Agency, it is the consensus that you can not share in all the different judgments.

John Eckert: Can the Indians choose which group they want to go with?

George Wright: No rules have been worked out on this point.

John Pappan: It is my understanding that whenever there is a distribution of claims awards, the legislation will indicate the rules of eligibility and this will dictate who can share. The Claims Commission itself, in the judgment on Area III in the Paiute case,excluded certain Indians in the Oregon area, which are being handled separately. Affiliation with those bands would rule you out, if you had no connection with other bands.

Ross Hardin: This is an important problem. At McDermitt there are people involved in the California case, the Malheur case, Area III, and the other Paiute areas, and the Shoshone case. The people at Fort McDermitt would like to have the rules of eligibility discussed with the effected groups. How will they know which one to choose?

Robert Leland: There are several things wrong with this discussion.

The Northern Paiutes have been unfavorably compared to the Washoe, who are said to be in complete agreement on all the issues their case brings up. You have been advised to work through "your council". Unlike the Washoe, you have in the Northern Paiute group a very large number of

(Robert Leland, Continued)

organized tribes and colonies involved; you have Indians who have no contact with tribes, who not only live off the reservations, but are not members of the tribes. You have strong groups and weak ones; rural groups and city ones. You have informed people, and uninformed people. It is all very well to advise you to get together, and I agree that you should. But that is no simple matter. You are going to have to work hard to inform yourselves, and then to agree on what is best for you. I'm afraid it is far too complicated to settle at an annual picnic.

So, the task is hard enough at best. But it is made much more difficult when people, whether deliberately or from ignorance, don't get the facts straight.

All the foregoing discussion has assumed that the claims money should be paid out to individual Indians. This certainly is not the only alternative. A trust fund is another possible solution. Some of the Indian people think the money should be invested for the benefit of future generations. It is mere chance that this particular generation of Indians is the one to receive payment for the land taken from your ancestors. It might as easily have happened after you are dead. Since it happens to come to you, instead of to your children or theirs, don't you feel some obligation to share it with future generations? Also, some tribes want to invest some of the money in economic development programs on their reservations. You should think about all these alternatives, and their effect on you and your children. The decisions are difficult. They require study. However, if the Indian people don't come to a reasonable understanding with each other on their own, they can be sure the problem will be solved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. If you can, difficult as it is, work out your own solution, it probably will be closer to what you want.

f. Effect of the Claims Cases on the Status of the Indians' Land and Rights

Harvey Cracker: The young people now don't understand what they are doing. What will happen to the children when the Indians sell off their land?

Stanley Smart: Why is it that the people wants to abolish all of their rights and still wants to be an Indian? How are they going to go about that? There's a lot of people here that feels if they abolish all of our rights, where are we going to go from there? Where are their children going to go? That is the reason that I am speaking for my tribe.

Dewey Sampson: In the auditorium when that matter was discussed about the compromise settlement, we had an individual boy there that day who asked our lawyers what the Indians would stand to lose if they signed the compromise [Northern Paiute Case, Area III Settlement]. There was no answer given to our people. Now we find out what we lost.

Robert Leland: What did you lose? One thing, only. By accepting the settlement for Area III you lost the chance that you might have gotten a little more money for it if you had appealed.

Dewey Sampson: We lost more than that. It wasn't a matter of dollars what we lost. We lost all these lands that was indicated here that's in between these three areas. Those are valuable lands. The Indians at that time never knew that that was included in the compromise. The fact the Government is willing to pay for the land proves the Indians still have equity in it. If we don't settle, the Government won't have clear title to the land.

Robert Leland: That is a pipe dream. The Government already owns the lands in question, and has for 100 years. It owns the land whether it pays the Indians for it or not. The United

(Robert Leland, Continued)

States believes the Indians should have been paid for it, so it is offering to do so now. But if an Indian thinks by not accepting payment for it he will someday get possession of the land, he is living in a fool's paradise.

By accepting what informed people consider to be a fair settlement you have everything to gain and nothing to lose. You already lost the land. Your choice is whether or not you would like to be paid something for it or not.

It is also unrealistic to contend that the settlement is unacceptable unless it pays you for the present value of the land. The law which allows you to sue says you can be paid the value at the time of taking, not the present value. The chances of getting this law changed are, in my opinion, zero.

Alyce Williams: We do have it in writing that termination is very definitely in the offing for all of us, as soon as they finish with our claims cases. We know this. And we can't see why our people can't seem to understand this. The white man is not going to give us something for nothing. It's very hard for a lot of our people to understand that. They say, well why are we making these long-range programs then, 50-year leases and all this and that. Well, the minute the Government decides to do away with any government agency, regardless of what it might be, when they say close down, they close down. There's not a darn thing the people can do about it. Not unless our Indian people start fighting something like that now. At McDermitt, they signed away all their rights. We have the paper work, which a good many of you have seen. What it boils down to is the Indian Commission is out for extermination of the Indian people, as a people. Because once we lose our reservations, we lose contact with one another.

Edward Hinckley: I'm here to get educated, and I didn't understand what you said about McDermitt being terminated.

Alyce Williams: I didn't say tomorrow, I said in the future, in the offing.

Edward Hinckley: I understood you to say they already had been terminated.

Robert Leland: There is no connection between the claims cases and termination. If we could get this point clear, we would have come a long way.

No land presently held by Indians is given up because a claims settlement is accepted. Many tribes have accepted settlements, and in spite of what some Indian people say, they have not been terminated. They still have the services of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Public Health Service, etc. Their land is still owned by them.

This whole issue is confused by the fact that during the same period when some tribes were receiving land claims settlements, others were being terminated. But these two things were entirely separate.

During the Eisenhower administration there was a strong move to terminate Indians. This is not true of the present administration. It is quite true, as Indians well know, that the next administration may make an abrupt change in its policies on Indian affairs. It is quite true they might start another termination drive. It is inevitable that someday Indian people will be treated exactly like any other Americans. They will not have special rights forever.

Nevertheless, this question of termination is separate from the claims questions.

There is one indirect connection. If a tribe should accept its money, and should handle it so wisely that it becomes very rich, it might very well decide for itself that it has had enough

(Robert Leland, Continued)

red tape and can do for itself all the things the Government now does for it, more quickly, better. If this should happen, the tribe has the right to ask for termination, if it wants to.

Nevertheless, accepting the money does not directly result in termination.

Unidentified Participant: Can the Indians fish and hunt without a license until the claim is settled?

George Wright: The outcome of the claims case does not effect present rules on hunting and fishing.

Donald Wade: The Nevada law allowing hunting and fishing rights to the Indian is the best thing for the Indian. I'm from California, and I don't get that. I pay my license, not only me but all California Indians.

Alyce Williams: Is that because you're terminated?

Donald Wade: No, we are not terminated. I still live on an Indian allotment, which is tax exempt, and I don't pay tax on my place as yet, and I hope not to.

Alyce Williams: But it will happen. If you are going to put in a resolution tomorrow about the claims, you should make darn sure that you put in it there that you reserve the rights for your minerals, for your hunting, your fishing; that you reserve the right for everything. The attorney is right when he says you are being paid for nothing but past damages done to your old people. It should stay that way, and the white man should not add any riders saying that because we accepted a few measley dollars we will lose all of our rights.

Unidentified Participant: Did your group consider how far you may be from becoming just normal American citizens without any special Indian privilege? Is it 50 years from now? Is it 100 years from now?

Alyce Williams: This is our country. We are a different people. It is our country, regardless of if we even take a penny for it. It's our heritage. The only thing wrong is that they tell us so many stories and confuse us.

Robert Leland: I have been attending discussions of the cases for over two years. If all the words which have been said during those meetings had been confined to the real issues involved, rather than wrangling over matters which can be determined on the basis of fact which are part of the public record, then we would be much closer to distribution of the money, already in the Treasury for a part of the Northern Paiute case, which could right now be being used to benefit Indians, instead of moulding in the Treasury. Indians have an obligation to each other to get down to the real issues, and to stop talking about questions which are not questions at all. Discussions as to whether or not accepting the claims settlement will lead to termination are absolutely meaningless. There is no connection between the two. It is too bad to waste time hearing things over and over again that are not true, when there are facts on record to establish what is true. There are so many other questions to discuss, real questions of philosophy where more than one point of view is possible and should be considered, that it is a shame to waste time refuting the same old untruths concerning ascertainable facts. Meetings like this give people a good opportunity to discuss the real issues; I urge you to get down to the real decisions which must be made.

g. Communication Between Tribal Councils and Members

Ray Mills: If the people don't have good representatives on their councils, they are out of luck.

George Wright: This is true. However, council members are elected, and there is plenty of opportunity to get good representation. If there is dissension among the Indians themselves, they will carry less weight in the final decisions.

Dewey Sampson: Individual Indians, rather than councils, should be able to vote on whether or not to accept the settlement.

George Wright: You should have a general meeting and a vote of the Indian group. The final resolution would have to come from the councils, but it in turn should abide by the decision of a majority of its members.

Harry Sampson: You talk about communications. Do you know where the communications stop? At the door of the community hall. Our old people don't understand what's being carried on in our Council meetings.

I have been the chairman of the Reno-Sparks Colony a good many times, and I have been secretary, and I know these things. I've been asked outside the council hall about various questions that confront our Indians. I tried to explain. But the councils don't get our communications to our older people. Same thing exists at Pyramid Lake. I've talked to some old people there and said, "You people know what's going on?". "Well, we just hear about those things, there's nothing we can do about it." Same thing exists on this Reno-Sparks Colony.

If I was to speak in my tongue here, why most of you people wouldn't know what I was saying. Most of you--even my own people--can't speak my language. That's funny. So you talk about communication.

I think each tribe should be involved in its own business, and let other tribes take care of their own. Everybody should know what's going or. They should have good interpreters. Thank you.

Stanley Smart: The old man there was talking about the people not knowing what the councils are doing. I agree with him. I will read you what our Council in McDermitt did:

> "The McDermitt Indians have a great interest in our program. They are conservative, honest and fair in their opinion of whatever is required before they become self-supporting, and attain a standard of living equal to that of their white neighbors. They favor paying taxes on their personal property and desire to become more active and accept citizenship, so to speak. There are approximately 32,000 acres of tribal land on the reservation. The Indians of Fort McDermitt Reservation are willing to deed their individual allotments to the tribe. This project is now under consideration and expected to start in 1944, when all the land on this reservation will be in tribal status."

My people don't want these things. Like the old man there was saying, there's a lot of people don't understand English, and they don't speak whatever they think and how they feel about this claim case. After they did find out, there's a lot of people that is in my tribe there at McDermitt, that is backing out on it. They're fighting among each other because they do not understand this communications you're talking about.

So, I'm representing them here.

I ask the adult education specialist, even the councilmen,to come there and explain this claim to them. We'd have an interpreter in the language of the Paiute, so they could all understand and enroll in this claim. They do not understand it. I feel sorry for my people that do not understand. I have spoke with my people and they also told me to come to this conference meeting here at this time. I hope that you understand what I'm saying. This is the first time I ever spoke over a mike. So thank you.

Ross Hardin: Referring to that statement Smart made there, that was way back in 1944. Mr. Galvin was Superintendent then. He made an overall plan for all the reservations in a book form, and that's where Smart got that. The present Council had nothing to do with that. That was way back. I do not know who was on the Council then. Maybe some of the old Council members recall that meeting when this was brought up. None of the Council members seemed to approve of it at that time. It wasn't passed as a resolution or anything at all. This was gotten up by Superintendent Galvin at that time.

Melvin Thom: I would just like to say at this time that all of us, Indians and non-Indians, should be tolerant of each other's opinions. We know that we have got all kinds of factions, groups, within our own tribal organizations. Our goal should be to be tolerant and listen to what the other people have to say. I would like to say to the non-Indians that we have reasons, good reasons, to gripe; and that they, too, must be tolerant. Cooperation among our communities is something new to us.

h. Offsets

Clarence McDade: I understand the Government is paying the Indians for land that was taken away from them, but then the Government takes back some of that money. What is that all about?

Robert Leland: These charges are called "offsets" to the claim. The Government has kept track of certain types of expenditures made on behalf of the Indian groups involved in that particular case.

The Government submits a list of these offsets to the attorneys in the case. The attorneys examine them to see if they are justified under the rules of the Commission and the precedents set by other cases. The attorneys try to get the Government to eliminate or reduce as many of these offsets as possible. If the

(Robert Leland, Continued)

Government and the attorneys, with the approval of the tribes, can agree on the amount of the offsets, then they submit this to the Commission, which probably will approve the compromise. If they can not agree, the evidence must be submitted to the Commission, and it will decide the amount.

Dewey Sampson: In the California cases, the offsets were large, and took a lot of the judgment money. Will it be that way in the Northern Paiute case?

Robert Leland: The offsets for Area III have been settled. Thanks to your attorneys, there were no offsets for this part of the case. Furthermore, your attorneys have obtained the Government's agreement to reduce the proved offsets for Areas II and I by 40%, no matter how much they are. And you can be sure the attorneys will get the offsets reduced as much as possible in the first place, before the 40% is deducted from them. The offsets in this case will not be large, compared to the total award.

George Wright: The Weissbrodt firm has asked the Government to make its claim for offsets in Areas II and I before the damages have been settled.

Robert Leland: This gives the attorneys more leverage, and guidance on what settlement should be accepted. It is good to get this information before the value of the land has been established; otherwise, the Government can adjust its offset claim according to the amount of the award.

George Wright: In the Washoe case, the offset settlement will be the third phase, after the amount due the Indians has been settled.

Ray Mills: The Indians are concerned about these offsets. What is included? The Government has spent a lot of money for Indian education, hospitalization and reservation improvements over the years. Will charges for these things be deducted?

George Wright: If an individual Indian has boarded at Stewart Indian School, or has been furnished money to go to another school, if the Commission follows prior decisions, such payments would not be proper offsets, and cannot be charged against the Government.

Now in some cases, where colonies have been established for the benefit of the tribe, and the Government has bought this land for them, I would say those charges should be proper offsets. These are moneys that have been furnished to the tribes as a whole. But until the Government has listed the offsets in your case, you won't know just what they are trying to include. Until your attorneys get this information, there is nothing they can tell you about them, no way to estimate what they will be. Anyway, the rules on these things are pretty well set by decisions in past cases. But your attorneys don't expect the offsets to be large in either the Northern Paiute or the Washoe case.

Robert Leland: Another type of offset occurs in cases where the Government made some payment for the land at the time it was taken away, under a treaty. The Government may have given a tribe 150 blankets and $1,000 a year for 50 years, let's say. Now, this was not a fair price, but it was some payment. Therefore, when the Commission decides what the land was worth, the partial payment under the treaty is deducted from what the Indians receive. The amount is usually small. Since the Northern Paiutes had no treaty, this type of offset doesn't figure in that case.

Clarence McDade: Indians who have land in their own names can't sell it, so what good is it? Why can't they have the land like other people do?

Robert Leland: That is a good question, but has nothing to do with the claims case. This law was set up to protect Indians; to make it hard for people to cheat them. Now many Indians are perfectly able to protect themselves, and

(Robert Leland, Continued)

perhaps this law should be changed. However, then you would have to pay taxes on the land. I notice in these discussions, that few Indian people want to give up their special rights. That is probably why the land is still held in trust for the Indians by the Government.

Dewey Sampson: Why was it in the California case that the Government awarded the Indians $.47 an acre for the land taken from them, but charged $1.25 as offsets for the land bought for the Indians?

George Wright: Now there are different types of Indian reservations. Some were established and the Indians located on them at an early date. As I understand it, those acres are excluded from offsets.

Other lands were purchased for the Indians later on--purchased back from the states. We have some of these in the Washoe case--three ranches, and in the Shoshone case.

Dewey Sampson: Well, I'm speaking of the lands that were involved in the unratified treaties, which were charged as offsets at $1.25 an acre in the California case.

George Wright: Now, you see we are getting far afield. I'm not too well acquainted with the California case. In the Nevada cases, as I understand it, Pyramid Lake was established in the early days and the Indians located on that land. I'm not sure, but I doubt that there would be any offsets for the land on that.

On the other hand, the South Fork lands were purchased for Shoshones about 1940. That would be an offset, and would probably be charged back, at the price paid for it. This may be what happened in the California case. You have to look at the facts in each case to know what offsets may be charged.

Ray Mills: On these offsets, that would include the roads and schools because that would benefit the tribes. Is that right?

George Wright: That is my understanding.

Ray Mills: Now on the reservations or colonies that were established, is there a date where the offsets begin? I mean, what year determines the early from the late reservations? Was there anything established on that?

George Wright: The Commission has ruled that if the Government settled the Indians on the land, the cost of the land is not charged as an offset against the Indians. But if the land was purchased at a later date, these are treated as offsets.

Ray Mills: Now that doesn't quite answer the question. What date? What date is a "later date"? I was under the impression the 1934 Reorganization Act determined that.

George Wright: You've got to check into those things pertaining to each case. For example, certain lands were purchased under the Howard Act. And under the Howard Act there is a question whether the lands purchased are chargeable as offsets. In the Washoe Area we are going to object to it. We have a resolution already adopted against it, because these lands were purchased to encourage the Indians to increase their status, to become better educated, to encourage them in their operation of a ranch, and to help teach them operation and management.

I think you should present that to your attorney who can look into it and determine whether or not there is a possibility to adopt the same procedure for your particular tribe, if such lands are involved. Is that clear? Do you understand what I mean?

Robert Leland: I think Mr. Mills still may be wondering why the Indians get paid 1853 prices for the lands that were taken, and get charged

(Robert Leland, Continued)

for offsets at later prices. None of these prices make any real sense. Anyway, it is useless to speculate about the offsets in these cases until the Government makes its claim. Then there will be something to talk about. Now we are just guessing, and wasting our time.

i. Communications from the Attorneys

Dewey Sampson: Information on the Paiute case should come from our attorneys in Washington. They should bring these things to the Paiutes and discuss them.

George Wright: A recent report from your attorneys has been sent to the tribes and is being printed in the Inter-Tribal Newsletter.

Dewey Sampson: The Shoshone information has been out for a year, but I haven't been able to get it from the attorneys.

George Wright: The Weissbrodt firm does not handle the Shoshone case.

The attorneys have provided information to the councils, who in turn must take the responsibility for informing the individual Indians. If the attorneys dealt with individuals, they would spend all their time on that, and none on the case. The Washoe attorneys have had annual meetings with the people for the last couple of years. This enables the attorneys to get information both to the tribal government and to interested individuals.

Robert Leland: The attorneys for the Northern Paiute case have reported to the tribal councils when there was something to report. If individuals have not received this information and wish it, they should leave their names with the Recorder. (None were left).

Alyce Williams: A good number of our Indian people had this gripe, that we wrote to

(Alyce Williams, Continued)

our attorneys a number of times, and we asked for information. Well, they'd reply, sometimes. Other times they wouldn't bother. But their replies never said anything.

To us this claim means everything. To the Indian people it means life, really, on the reservation. So they should give us more information.

We saw what happened to the California Indians, and it was really bad. I've never seen anything done like this. I didn't think things like that could be done in this day and age. I wish this entire group could have just sat in on one California Indian meeting to see the way the attorneys ramrodded through the claims settlement.

This is too important for just a few people to sit around and draw up a resolution. Actually, it is too important to consider it until the attorneys finally kick in with all of the information that we should have, and then maybe we'll be able to come up with something that would make sense. But until we know for sure what they have in mind for us, then we shouldn't do anything about it at all, in writing.

Ray Mills: I agree with Alyce on that. We discussed that in our small group session a bit, too, about not getting information. How do you go about trying to get information? We came out of the whole thing more confused and knowing less.

George Wright: At first the attorneys for the Washoe were neglectful in giving information to the Council. Then we realized they were entitled to information. The last three years, as I said, we have had annual picnics. The appraisers were there, and the attorneys have appeared and tried to keep the Washoes fully advised. I'm not trying to say this is a model case at all, or how the other cases should be run. But attorneys get busy and sometimes they

(George Wright, Continued)

don't give you as much information as you'd like, especially, when the attorneys are back East. I think we have adopted a good system in the Washoe case. Work out something like that on the other claims. It will probably help. You'll get better results.

Daisey Bird: We had a meeting with Mr. Barker some time ago, and I was there. He made a wonderful statement which I thought was in favor of the Shoshone people. He said, "Your claim, we have won". And he said, "There will be no termination". I don't know where people get that idea after the compensation is divided that we will be terminated. Furthermore, on taxation, some people have said that this claim they are getting is going to be taxed. But Mr. Barker said it will be tax free. Now I don't know where these other people get that idea that they will tax that compensation and they won't get nothing at all. I heard this from Mr. Barker, myself, and I was there at the meeting. And it was a fair meeting. Now, be fair, you Indian people. I'll say, deal with your lawyers and attorneys in fair way, or you will never win. That is all.

Alyce Williams: May I answer Daisey's statement? We attended a number of the California meetings. Barker and some of the other fellows who are working on the California claim were there. Mr. Barker said that he was even thinking about paying out of his own pocket all of the expenses of their long trips up and down the State of California. So we went down to Yuma to the final meeting and Mr. Barker told the Yuma people (the Quechan and Yuman tribe) that there had been $500,000 appropriated from the remainder of the California Indian money to pay for their expenses up and down the State of California, as well as to print that fancy little booklet that they passed out to all the Indian people and expected them to read and understand in the space of two hours, and listen to them talk at the same time and then vote. And they didn't give our Indian

(Alyce Williams, Continued)

people a chance to get up and say one word on our position. We saw this happen.

Mr. Barker also said in Sacramento that he worked real hard for 17 years; he told us (and this is just how he said it) every evening he took home a brief of the California case. He had no time for his family. He didn't even get to spend Christmas day with them, because of the case.

I asked him what he was doing for the Shoshones, then. (He's their attorney, too.)

So, they tell you all kinds of stories. If you believe it, if you go along with it, this is fine. But don't hurt all the people by some of your beliefs, because they're not in the interests of the Indian people.

Syble Rupert: I think the Washoe people will agree with me that they've been pretty well pleased with the attorney they have, Mr. George Wright.

Robert Leland: I have discussed the matter of communication with the Weissbrodts. They say they get letter after letter from individuals asking such things as, "How much will our offsets be, how much money will we get, how many people will share the money?". They answer, explaining that these are things we simply can't know yet, until the case is farther along. I suppose after they answer the same thing to the same people several times they don't feel it's necessary to answer again. Some of you may not understand just how the cases work. There isn't a new development every day. There are long periods when the Government's brief is being awaited, or while the attorneys are preparing the next phase of the case. Step by step, each time there is a development on the case they have prepared a written report to the tribes. That is all they can do. In the meantime, when you don't hear from them, nothing is happening. They

(Robert Leland, Continued)

can't answer questions that are not answerable yet, and they can't make up news when there is none. I, myself, have offered to give people copies of documents. The very people who say they don't understand the case and can't get information are the ones who haven't bothered to get these documents from me. The Weissbrodts have asked me to help them by serving as a local representative to get the information to you people. I have talked to countless individuals. I have spoken to every tribe or other group that has asked me. I don't know what more can be done.

j. Attorneys' and Experts' Fees

Ed Johnson: Who pays the attorneys? Is it the Tribal Council? If so, I think it would be easy for the Council to put pressure on them to get information.

Robert Leland: In most cases, the attorneys don't receive any pay until the case is settled. They receive a percentage of the judgment, and that percentage is established by the Claims Commission. In many cases, the attorneys have been working more than 15 years with no pay. They have financed the expenses themselves. If the case is not won, they get nothing. If it is won, they are paid from the proceeds, but in no event more than 10%. The appraisers' fees also have been paid from the proceeds.

George Wright: The Washoe Tribe didn't have any money for witnesses, transportation, or paying attorneys. But we took the case, anyway. I have dug down in my own pocket and spent $25,000, plus paying the experts. I've paid my own transportation, and got nothing for my time, so far. I have given you folks the benefit of what little knowledge I had. Congress now has passed an act to put $800,000 in a revolving credit fund so the tribes can borrow the money to hire the experts they need to get the best possible job done. We didn't have the

(George Wright, Continued)

benefit of this financing in the earlier days. Even so, we believe we did get the job done, and a good one.

Alex Simirenko: [In the Area III settlement of the Northern Paiute case] how much money was left after deductions?

John Pappan: The award was $3,650,000. The attorneys were paid $367,000 for their fees and expenses, and the appraisers were paid $27,000. However, since the money was deposited in the U. S. Treasury, the interest accrued already has covered these payments, so the total now on deposit is about the same as the original judgment.

k. Other Legislative Matters

George Wright: I would like to suggest some other topics for discussion by the group: grazing on public lands; fishing and hunting rights; national, state and local elections, and other matters pertaining to national, state, county and municipal groups.

The price of beef has dropped 6¢ to 8¢ a pound in the past year. The group might consider a resolution favoring the limitation of beef imports and establishing quotas. Many Indians have cattle.

Stannard Frank: The individual livestock associations are better informed about this and can take their own action.

Dewey Sampson: The livestock matter was brought up unexpectedly. The Indians who are informed on such matters are not present. If it had been known the issue were to be raised, some of the stockmen would have come. The people who are not informed do not wish to take action without their advice.

Lawrence Jacobsen: It is very apparent that Indian problems require federal and state action of some sort, yet it appears from the talk today

(Lawrence Jacobsen, Continued)

that none of them are going to be solved by talk. Government representatives have left the door open to the Indians. The Indians should tell them what they want done for them. You won't accomplish much by sitting here and talking. As one person, you have little influence to accomplish a job. As a group, if you directed your representatives, you would accomplish a lot more. I serve as a member of the Federal, Indian and Military Affairs Committee of the Assembly. I don't remember ever being asked by an Indian to do anything. There are few bills applying to Indians. You should get together and fight for what you want, or you won't get it. It is the obligation of Indian people as Americans to consolidate their thinking.

Martin Levine: I wonder if this process of open discussion at this Conference won't help accomplish this. A Conference like this seems to be aimed in the right direction.

IV. BANQUET (May 1) Speech by Mrs. Ruth M. Bronson*

Since this Conference is mainly concerned with the organization of an Inter-Tribal Council for Nevada, and since most of the 35 or more years of my working life have been devoted to helping Indian leadership grow and develop, I want to address most of my remarks here tonight to the subject of Nevada Indian leadership and some of the tasks ahead for you and for those leaders who will come after you.

What is a leader? Who of you here are leaders, and why? How can we improve our leadership qualities? Put in its most simple terms, I would say that any one of you here who influences another person to any kind of action is in a limited sense a leader. The power and degree of that leadership will vary in proportion to the number of people who are induced to follow the ideas and beliefs of the individual who has them.

In every society and in every age there have been good and bad leaders, and civilizations have thrived or fallen because of them. Thirty or so years ago, when I first began attending meetings where Indians controlled the program, again and again, in speech after speech, Indian

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* Summary prepared by Mrs. Ruth Bronson, April, 1965. The Banquet Session was not tape-recorded.

Left to Right:
Marilyn Stewart,
Benjie Aleck,
Henrietta Tobey.

Other participants were:
Alvin Chavez,
Carol Cypher,
Tom Dressler,
Joy Johnson,
Rose Mackea,
Donna Malone,
Allen Melendez,
Carol O'Daye,
assisted by
Mr. Max Coffey.

A Skit by Members of the Baptist Youth Fellowship

BANQUET, May 1

The participants were entertained by students from Stewart Indian School, and members of the Baptist Youth Fellowship, Colony Baptist Church, Reno. Allen Aleck, Treasurer of the Inter-Tribal Council, was Master of Ceremonies. The speaker was Mrs. Ruth Bronson, Community Development Foundation of the Save the Children Federation.

Banquet at the Jot Travis Union Apache Dancers, Stewart Indian School

(Mrs. Ruth M. Bronson, Continued)

speakers would dwell on the tribal tragedies of the past, on how badly the Indians had been treated by the newcomers who settled this continent. The emphasis then was always on how tribal holdings had been destroyed, how Indian life had disintegrated until, it seemed to me then, that the men and women who ought to have been tackling the problems of today were so haunted by their past history that they could not move beyond those early tragic years into the complicated, demanding, challenging present day.

Then, over the years, I have seen a change come in Indian leadership with whom the Indian past assumed its proper place--not as the only focus of attention, but rather as background to explain in part why things are as they are today, simply as a base from which to move forward. Last week I attended a conference of tribal leaders in Arizona, at which only Indians held the speakers platform. Not one Indian speaker talked about past wrongs or past history. Every speaker was aiming at tomorrow, planning ahead for the tribal groups who must meet the problems which confront their communities in 1964 and 1965 and the years after 1965. This kind of thinking spells out my measure of Indian growth. This is the kind of progress I hope will result from your organization of this Inter-Tribal Council for Nevada.

I have listened to your discussions here at this Conference, and I have been saddened by the number of Indians who talk from the floor who have been concerned only to dwell on the old wrongs. These are important, I grant you, and there are plenty of old wrongs to remember, but they belong to yesterday, and yesterday has gone by. There are grave and compelling problems confronting Nevada Indians today. We need to be thinking about how we can solve those problems with the tools we have today. How can we sharpen those tools, even find new tools to help us find sound solutions? What are we going to do about the disintegration of Indian family life that is destroying our Indian communities today? What are we going to do about this slow death of Nevada Indian communities? What are we going to do about our young people who will not stay in school long enough to prepare themselves for a decent, self-sufficient livelihood? What about the growing problem of alcoholism in Indian communities? Can we sit back and wait for someone else to solve these very serious and present needs of

(Mrs. Ruth M. Bronson, Continued)

Nevada Indians? Who knows what Nevada Indian needs really are? Some outsider who comes in and looks you over, or yourselves, who must live out these experiences day after day? Only you, who live through these situations, can know what your real needs are, and only you, working together, can meet those needs.

Unfortunately, I was not able to stay many weeks in Nevada, but during the month and a half that I worked here I discovered that Nevada Indians have many friends in the State who would help you if only they knew what you would like to have them do in your behalf. You must interpret your needs to these friends; you must point the way toward the solution of your problems. No one really knows but you. That is why this organization of an Inter-Tribal Council holds such hope, in my opinion. Instead of disagreement and bickering among the various groups of Indians in Nevada, through this Council you will be working together in areas in which you will agree; and you will be surprised at how many such areas there are. You will mobilize those forces friendly to your cause, so that you can get the State legislation or national legislation you will need to help you. I am sure you have found at this Conference that you do not stand alone, and this is a great and glorious discovery to make. Secure in this knowledge, you can move ahead into a new day.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS (May 2)

A. John Dressler

The featured speaker today is a man well-known to many of you. He has traveled a good part of the country, and he has seen how Indian people work. He has put his heart and soul into helping our Indian people. A local Nevada Indian, Mel Thom.

B. Melvin Thom

Thank you, Mr. Dressler. Delegates to the Nevada Inter-Tribal Indian Conference, guests, and ladies and gentlemen. We are gathered here for a common purpose: to find ways and means of promoting understanding and cooperation between our helping agencies and Indian people. For only through understanding will the needs of Indian people be realized. Indians must be understood if their real needs are to be served. Communication between Indians, our helping agencies, and the general public is an important concept at this time in Indian history. Understanding through good communication will serve to educate all of us no matter what level.

(Melvin Thom, Continued)

The theme of this Conference--Communication for Opportunities--is well chosen. Indian people of this State and throughout the country all have something to say. It is important now that we have our say, especially when the country's government and citizens are concerned with racial problems and questions of government control. It is not easy for Indian people to get up and say, "We want such and such a program, we want such and such a policy". For we have long been denied the opportunity to make decisions for ourselves.

I hope the time is nearing when Indian people can have more say over policies and programs which will directly effect us. This denial to make our own choices has not been social discrimination. Rather than social discrimination, we are victims of a long chain of policies and programs whose functions have been to break up the Indian social structure, and replace it with so-called up-to-date ways of living. This has all been done with the best intentions of serving Indian people. But along the way, our Congress and the Bureau of Indian Affairs forgot to ask if the Indians would like to share in the planning of their future.

The decline in Indian political integrity began in the early 1800's when this country undertook to civilize the so-called savages. By that Act in 1871, Congressmen no longer dealt with Indian tribes as nations. The concept of equality then disappeared. We no longer entered into agreements with this country on the basis of equal parties. We then assumed a wardship status.

Through the General Allotment Act of 1887, we lost much of our reserve lands and a new concept of private ownership was forced upon us. These were acts of good faith to help Indians, but they tore down Indian integrity and took away a life that had meaning. I sometimes think of what the old people meant when they said, "Go and learn the ways of the white man". I'm sure that they were too wise to mean that we should change ourselves to white men. They meant that we should find new ways of providing ourselves a way of living, in that we had to live with what was there at that time, and what is here today. They did not mean that the Indian was to be destroyed because his ways were bad.

(Melvin Thom, Continued)

We're not living in the past when we refer to the old ways. We, too, want to share the material wealth and privileges of a modern progressive America. But we must look back to know who and what we are. If we forget the past, we'll be cutting ourselves adrift further into the lower levels of American life. We need to take into consideration our Indian social structure to build a better life for ourselves. We want our lands and our homes. We want our lands and our homes to exist in Indian hands forever. We have got to have a place which we can call our own. This is only right.

We need help, we need a lot of help. This country agreed to give Indians general welfare in the way of hospitals, schools and technical assistance. This is in exchange for this very land upon which the greatest country in the world is founded. The assistance given to Indians is not charity. Our rights as Indian people are property rights. They are inherited from our forefathers. We should all work to remove the popular thinking that Indian people are just a burden upon this country's government. If we are burdens and are considered as such, I say that we are the most deserving of burdensome aid given by this government.

We spend a lot of time talking about cooperation. Cooperation with Indians and our benevolent agencies has not been worked to the best benefit of the Indians. In the first place, with the wardship status that we have, we cannot cooperate when we are not treated with an equal say. The Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Soil Conservation Service, and many other agencies and people are concerned on the reservations. It's easy for them to propose actions that our governing bodies should take. These are prepared for us and they are brought to our governing bodies for acceptance. The Indian is not given a full chance to have his complete say.

Now this is not the fault, complete fault, of the Bureau or other people who are trying to help Indians. It is just as much our fault as Indian people. We have got to take responsibility to manage our own councils and our own self-government. This is the means by which we are going to improve the standard of living of

(Melvin Thom, Continued)

our people, make our people aware, and provide a home for Indian generations which are to follow.

In the way of education it's been said over and over that Indians must become educated. We hear it whenever we talk at an Indian conference. I think we should push our talk of education just a little bit further. The important thing for Indians is that there be motivation for an education; that there be purpose for education. We can't just go up and tell our young Indian people to get educated. They ask you what for. "What's it going to do for me, what's it going to do for my people? Is it going to destroy us?" And this is where education is going to require a lot of meaning with Indians; when we know that we have a place to put our education to work, and when our educated people come back to help the rest of our Indian people (who need all the educated people that we can find to help improve what we have, to make a happier life for our Indian communities).

We Indian people did not get to write our own history. No one, especially in our Nevada history, tells too much about what happened to any Indian tribe. Pictures always pointed out that the Indian was sort of a bad guy. And when young Indian children see their kind on TV, or read about them as being bad, that just causes conflict right among our own Indian homes. There are two ways in which we can try to improve this situation. First, we should broaden our educational scope so that our young Indian people will be better informed as to who they were and what they did. Second, and most important (in that it comes right back to our own homes) is the responsibility of parents and the responsibility of our governing bodies to improve education as to what we are, right in our own communities.

We need to make the public aware of what we are and what we need. This is not easy. To appear in the press, on radio, over TV, a thing has to be sensational. They exaggerate things and the Indians are sometimes ashamed of what comes out. The American public does not want to hear about some poor, misunderstood, deprived Indians. And it is not easy for our older people to go and tell them that this is wrong. It's not even easy for young

(Melvin Thom, Continued)

people. It's a matter of understanding our news media and how they operate and how we can make our Indian stories, our Indian gripes and grievances, heard.

This is very important at this time, especially when there are considerations of racial discrimination and racial differences, to let the American public know that the Indian people are the most conservative of all people, they're the most patriotic of all people; that they want to remain Indians, remain what we are, and also we want to share in the privileges and the material things that this country has to offer for us; that this country has obligations, and we are not completely charity recipients.

In political action, the Indian people could be one of the most effective minorities if they could ever get together. The image of the Indian is good. He is an image of nobility. Even in the city of Reno, you can't drive two miles without seeing a picture of an Indian. (We should charge them for that.)

In many of our communities the Indian population is not a majority. However, it's a sizable number that can make a difference in political action. We must impress upon Indian people that we should take advantage of voting in our state and national elections; and even more, we should encourage Indian people to take part in voting in our own tribal elections. For this is the very basis by which Indian tribes can exist and build. We need, too, to make our people aware that our tribal governments are founded upon a federal corporation. It's a very effective instrument in that we can enter into agreements and that we can have solidity in the same way that any other municipality has, except ours will be under a federal charter. There's no reason why the Walker River Tribe could not be as effective a political or municipal body as the city of Yerington or the city of Fallon, and this is what it's set up for. It's a matter of us having to use this.

I'm a member of the National Indian Youth Council, president of the organization, and I'd like to say that we would like to find ways in which we can mobilize the Indian people, and it's not easy. It's very discouraging.

(Melvin Thom, Continued)

Nobody, especially the Indians, wants to hear Indians' crying stories. You go out and say, "I'm going to make some changes or I'm going to see if I can have a voice in Indian affairs". Well, you don't get very far. And I think many of us who have tried realize this.

Indian people are not capable of devising strategy--I'm not talking about devious strategy, but political strategy in which our Indian organizations and our Indian people can become more effective in taking action. Now this is what our younger people, and the older people need at this time. They need to be given confidence, and our young people need to be given some courage to speak out.

I'm sure that the time is nearing when this is going to come about. When it does come about I hope it's the right action that will benefit Indian people the most. Indian people have been held down and in some ways not completely informed. This is a dangerous thing. Because once people become informed, and once they know what happened, there is a tendency to become angry. I have observed this in the tribes throughout the country, especially in the Indians with treaty rights. They thought this was just a gift. When they found out that this was law, and that they had been deprived, there was anger. I guess it's the same thing that started revolutions in other countries. However, I'm not speaking revolutionary talk, but these are terms which people can understand.

It's very difficult to speak in terms in which all people can understand. Now, some people may be eloquent speakers that non-Indians can understand real well, but they can't talk to Indians. This goes back to a matter of strategy in which we have to think and work out ways and means in which we can eventually get our message across.

In closing, I'd like to say that I'm encouraged by the participation that I see here. It's our first Inter-Tribal Conference, and I'm sure that a lot of good things came out of it; maybe not right here, but in the messages we take home, the talk and thinking that's going to be stirred up. I thank you for this opportunity to be able to talk.

C. John Dressler

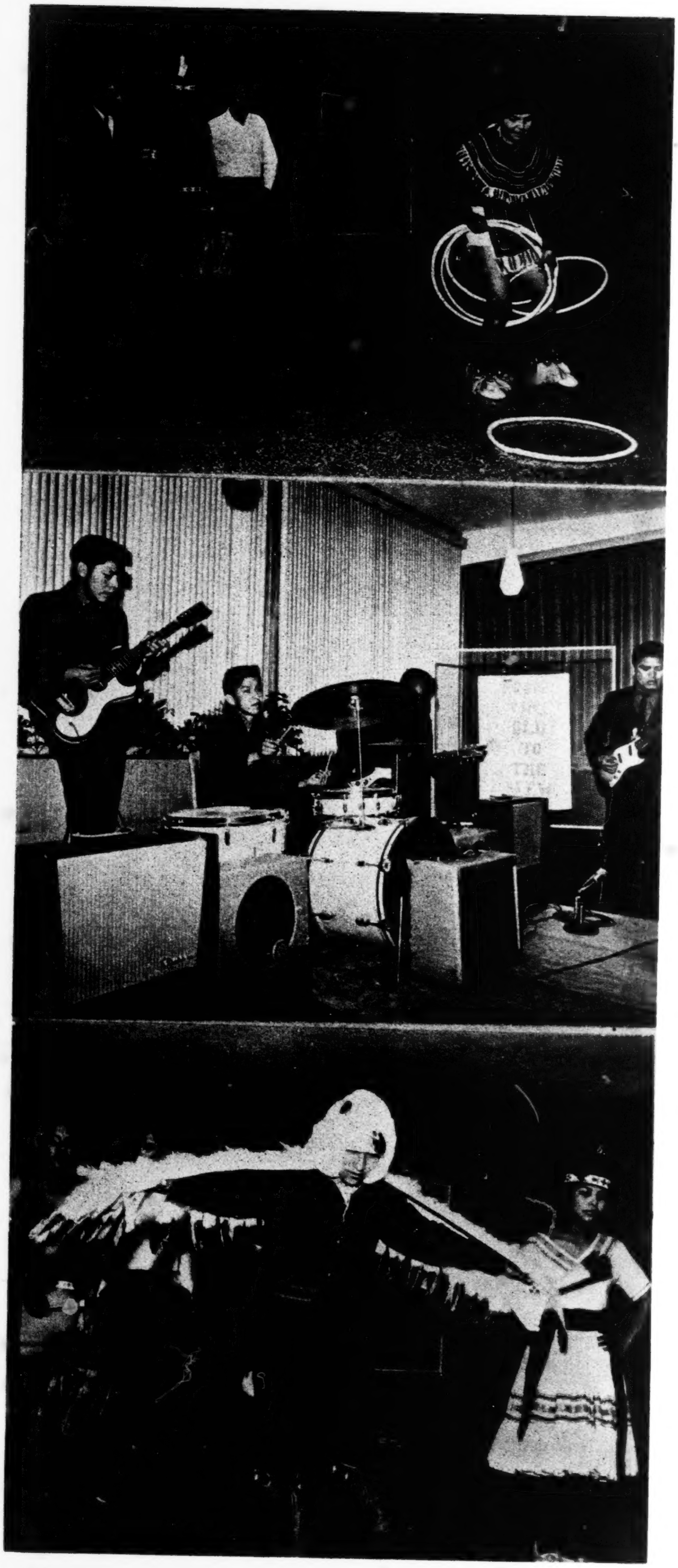
Thank you very much, Mel. We're especially glad to have Mr. Thom with us today speaking in behalf of the Conference in expressing his views after seeing what has been going on throughout the country.

Much has been said here. We feel a record of it should be compiled for future reference and conferences. We would like a continuation of these conferences, one big annual affair, and thereafter small conferences in communities where Indians are living. When you get home, talk this over with the local people. We would like for you to send back a report with your thoughts on these subjects. Keep in mind that we want to continue this affair.

I have a list of participants here which you may be interested in. People have come from far and wide. It's quite impressive. The total attendance over the Conference period is 228. Very good attendance. We expected 100 people at the most at the Conference. This exceeds all expectations. We're sure thankful for your attendance.

Once again, I would like to thank the Welcoming Committee. They have done a great job at the Conference. And I wish to extend my wholehearted thanks to Dr. Wayne Martin of the University of Nevada, who has helped so much in arranging the Conference. And I want to thank the Planning Committee, which has worked hard and long and given a lot of their time in planning this Conference. And I wish to extend our appreciation to the University of Nevada for the use of its facilities.

Now, I would like to officially close the Conference.



BANQUET, May 1

STEWART INDIAN SCHOOL STUDENTS

Top: (Left to right) Franklin Stanley, Tom Coochyumptewa, Alonzo Dili, Sarah Cleveland.

Center:The Valiants Dance Band (Left to right) Larry Philips, Whitman Cassadores, Ron Kinney and Karl Kinney.

Bottom: (Left to right) Tom Coochyumptewa, Alonzo Dili, Manuel Honeyumptewa, Virginia Zeena.

Other participants were: Charlotte Dean, Harold Harney, Frances Hinton,Graham Johnson, Rufus Johnson, Benedict Key, Fernando Pechuli, Jonathan Victor (Dancers); and Florence Toney (Vocalist).

NEVADA INTER-TRIBAL INDIAN CONFERENCE

PROGRAM

Friday, May 1

10:00 A.M. - REGISTRATION Jot Travis Union

12:30 P.M. - LUNCHEON Jot Travis Union Lounge

The Wa-pa-shone Glee Club

Presented by: Mrs. Leah Manning
Social Worker,
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Welcoming Remarks: Dr. Charles J. Armstrong
President, University of Nevada

1:00 P.M. - INTRODUCTION TO THE CONFERENCE

Moderator: Mr. John Dressler, Chairman
Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada

The History of Indian Education in Nevada

Address: Mrs. Nellie Harnar
Guidance Teacher, Stewart Indian School

1:30 P.M. - CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

Mr. Edward Johnson
Chairman, Welcoming Committee
Dr. Warren d'Azevedo
Associate Professor of Anthropology
Mr. Edward Hinckley
Education Specialist
PHS Indian Hospital, Schurz, Nevada
Dr. Martin Levine
Supervisor, State Bureau of Mental Health

2:00 P.M. - SMALL GROUP SESSIONS

I. "Indians and Opportunity"
Moderator: Mr. George Romance
Recorder: Mr. Charles Poehlman

II. "Indians and the Community"
Moderator: Mr. Delbert Howard
Recorder: Mr. Charles White

III. "Indians and Legislation"
Moderator: Mr. George Wright
Recorder: Mrs. Robert Leland

3:30 P.M. - ALL-CONFERENCE SESSION Jot Travis Union Lounge

Reports from small group session representatives
Discussion
Moderator: Dr. Martin Levine

6:45 P.M. - BANQUET Jot Travis Union Lounge

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Allen Aleck

Speaker: Mrs. Ruth M. Bronson
Community Development Foundation
Save the Children Federation

8:15 P.M. - ENTERTAINMENT

Reno-Sparks Colony Youth Group
The Stewart Indian Dancers

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Saturday, May 2 (As Revised May 2, 1964)

9:00 A.M. - ALL-CONFERENCE SESSION Jot Travis Union Lounge

9:30 A.M. - SMALL GROUP SESSIONS

11:00 A.M. - ALL-CONFERENCE SESSION

Greetings: Governor Grant S. Sawyer

12:00 Noon - LUNCHEON Jot Travis Union Lounge

Speaker: Mr. Melvin Thom, Chairman
National Indian Youth Council

Summary Reports and Recommendations: Discussion

ADJOURNMENT

THE NEVADA INTER-TRIBAL INDIAN CONFERENCE
University of Nevada, Reno
May 1 and 2, 1964

PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada:

John Dressler, Chairman
Syble Rupert, Secretary
Allen Aleck, Treasurer
Edward Johnson, Newsletter Editor
Delbert Howard

University of Nevada:

Warren d'Azevedo, Department of Sociology-Anthropology
Joy Leland, Center for Western North American Studies, Desert Research Institute
Wayne Martin, Statewide Services

Public Health Service, Division of Indian Health:

Edward Hinckley, Schurz Indian Hospital
George Romance, Schurz Indian Hospital

Nevada Department of Education:

Charles Poehlman, Indian Education Division

Nevada Department of Health and Welfare, Health Division:

Martin Levine, Bureau of Mental Health

Colony Christian Center:

Clyde H. Mathews, Jr., Minister

Bureau of Indian Affairs:

Charles White, Nevada Indian Agency

OTHER COOPERATING AGENCIES:

State Bar Association of Nevada
Nevada Council of Churches
Nevada State Medical Association
Nevada State Museum

WELCOMING COMMITTEE (University of Nevada Students):

George S. Bryan
Marvin Victor Garity
Bob Lawrence Hunter
Edward Charles Johnson
Larry M. Manning
Tim Thompson
Shirley Ann Williams
Harold Wyatt

THE NEVADA INTER-TRIBAL INDIAN CONFERENCE
University of Nevada, Reno
May 1 and 2, 1964

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The transcription of the tape-recordings of the Conference has been rearranged by subject, and has been condensed considerably for this publication. For the sake of clarity and conciseness, chronological order and the speakers' individual styles frequently have been sacrificed.

The unedited transcript has been preserved and is available for study by anyone who prefers to use the material in its original form.

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